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The Week-end Review

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THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION—The Week-end Review. *Incorporating The New Statesman, The Nation and Athenaeum, Week-end Review.*

THE Berlin talks are over, and nobody but an armament manufacturer can draw any comfort from them. If Herr Hitler means all that he said to Sir John Simon the chances of a settlement of Europe seem as remote as the Greek Kalends. He is uncompromising in his demands, and offers no concessions now that he has taken the offensive. He is, of course, unrepentant about Germany's new army. For the present, he says, it will probably not be over the half-million, but it may be bigger later if other people go on increasing their forces. The German air strength is to be equal to the British and the French; about the German navy there is less certainty, but there appears to be an idea of building up to the French level. As to the League of Nations, Germany would consider coming in again on her own terms, which it is intimated might be stiff. On the Danubian pact Hitler's attitude was evasive; he does not want to debar himself from getting in at Austria's back door, if he cannot get in at the front. Against an "Eastern Locarno" he was adamant—Soviet Russia is the devil.

Hitler and Russia

In face of this it is ludicrous to say, in the words of the official communiqué, that "the discussions strengthened the conviction that the peace of Europe can best be promoted by international co-operation." Hitler refuses point blank to co-operate with Russia. He fulminates against Bolshevism; he even pretends that the Russian armaments are directed against Germany, though there is not the slightest evidence of that; and, in fact, there is abundant evidence that Russia has no aggressive designs upon anybody. Is Hitler then simply blinded by his hatred of Communism? Or is the explanation a much more sinister one? Is it that Germany wants to keep a free hand to attack Russia when it suits her? In any case the attempt to exclude Russia from a system of collective security must be fatal to an accommodation. There is general agreement on the Russian dictum that "the peace of Europe is indivisible," and it has been made perfectly clear that Great Britain is no more prepared than France to conclude an arrangement with Germany for mutual security in the West while leaving her free to make mischief in the East. It is idle to suggest that, even on grounds of bare self-interest, we could look on with complacency at a Russo-German war. It is quite certain that France and other countries on the Continent will take drastic steps to prevent such a catastrophe. And indeed it is probable that Hitler's "frank and friendly" talk with Sir John Simon has already helped to advance a Franco-Russian alliance.

Memel

Into the middle of the discussion on Tuesday there burst the news from Lithuania. The military court at Kovno had passed sentence—death for four and varying terms of imprisonment for about eighty others—on the German "conspirators" in Memel who had plotted to

seize the government and hand it over to Germany. How serious this conspiracy really was we do not profess to know; but reports from Lithuania suggest that the evidence at the trial was not very damning. In Germany the news of the sentences provoked a furious outcry, including the charge that the trial was unfair—a grim irony, this, considering how the Nazis have conducted trials themselves, what they have done without any trials at all, how they are at this moment at issue with the Swiss Government over the kidnapping of Herr Jacob. Hitler himself was deeply moved and appealed for Sir John Simon's sympathy in this "scandalous humiliation." What then is Germany's grievance? It is that Memel is hers by right; it was taken from her in 1919, and ultimately put by the victorious Powers under a special statute, which gives local autonomy to the "Territory" while allowing Lithuania, as suzerain State, access to the sea. It has not been, and probably never could be, a satisfactory arrangement, and the Germans can put up a strong case, though not so overwhelming as they pretend, for the recovery of Memel. But they cannot claim the right to take it back at the pistol's point.

Deutschland Gegen Alles?

Memel does not stand alone. Germany, as she constantly reminds herself, has other irredentas. Some of them she might fairly hope to regain by peaceful agreement. But what are her chances if she refuses to come to terms, as Hitler appears to be refusing, except on a basis which gives her all the jam and other people all the powder? If the assertion of German equality is to mean "Deutschland über alles," then she will find herself in the position of "Deutschland gegen alles," faced by a powerful resistance to any claim she advances. We still hope that Hitler will think again before he forces on an "encirclement of Germany." But if he remains intransigent, what are the rest of us to do? The principle of collective security must not be abandoned, but strengthened. That, we are sure, is what public opinion in this country demands, and it is shown by the remarkable results of the Peace Ballot, of which we say more on another page of this issue. The millions who have voted in that ballot have not voted against the National Government as a war-monger; they have voted in favour of a more strenuous peace policy. Such a policy means positive measures of collective security, not merely pious phrases and the increase of national armaments. It is still possible (even with Germany outside though with the door open for her to come in), to put a limit to the ruinous race in armaments, since the pooled forces of the League Powers are more than sufficient to meet any German threat to peace.

The Arms Inquiry

The extracts from the evidence presented to the American Senatorial Inquiry which Lord Marley read to the House of Lords on Wednesday should have convinced anyone that the British Commission must, if it is to be any good, have access to the private papers of armament firms, and above all to their correspondence with Whitehall departments. No one can take the Commission seriously if it has not the special powers which we have demanded from the outset and which Lord Marley again demanded on Wednesday. Lord Halifax's reply for the Government was a perfect example of the straits to which an intelligent and usually honest man may be reduced in defending an impossible position in his capacity as a Minister. What is the use at this time of day, with the knowledge we have of the history of armament firms and of the sort of material that the American inquiry produced from their archives—what is the use of Lord Halifax trying to persuade us that their representatives will voluntarily come before a Commission and tell us all about their business without concealment or prevarication? And, as if to leave no doubt about their enthusiasm for armament publicity, Lord Stanhope, the Government spokesman at Geneva, was finally turning down the American proposal for inspection of armaments on the spot, thus burying the last hopeful remnant of the late Disarmament Conference.

The Public Health

The debate on public health in the House of Commons on Monday was of more than usual importance. Mr. Rhys Davies, who opened it, concentrated mainly on three points—the very real grievance of those unfortunates who are being elbowed out of National Health Insurance on account of prolonged unemployment, and the problems of infant and maternal mortality. On the first of these points, over which there is widespread indignation, the Government spokesman promised a Bill in the near future to safeguard the previous rights of the victims, but gave no further indication of the scope of the Bill, or of its financial effect on the Approved Societies. As regards infant mortality, Mr. Davies pointed out that, though the general rate had been halved during the past thirty years, there were still enormous differences from place to place, mainly corresponding to differences of wealth. In relation to maternal mortality, he stressed the sinister fact that the rate has been actually increasing in recent years, and demanded that action should be taken on the Report of the Joint Council on Midwifery, which recommends the general establishment of local authorities of a salaried midwifery service. In the Home Counties, he pointed out, there is one district nurse per 2,800 of population. In the Rhondda those nurses have to serve a population of 140,000. On this issue Mr. Shakespeare, for the Government, made an oncoming but inconclusive reply. Special inquiry was being made now into all the "black areas," and local authorities were being urged to improve their services. Midwives ought to be better paid and their training improved, and a Report on the whole subject would be issued later in the year. A Report is very well in its way, but what is wanted is action, both for the effective prevention of malnutrition and for the establishment of a competent maternity service over the whole country.

Ships and Seamen

Mr. Runciman has at last agreed to institute a special inquiry, under Lord Merrivale's chairmanship, into the cause of the loss, with all hands, of certain British ships at sea. It has taken a long struggle to bring Mr. Runciman to this point; and even now he appears to resent any allegation that all is not well with the British shipping industry almost as a personal affront. About the particular disasters that are now to be investigated it is of course impossible to say anything while the matter is under inquiry. For all we know, the owners of these particular vessels may come out of the investigation with a perfectly

blameless record. But there is undoubtedly among both officers and seamen of the mercantile marine a very strong feeling and belief that the bad financial position of British shipping has led to dangerous economies by a number of owners, especially smaller firms with little or nothing in reserve, and that a good many ships have gone to sea of late either inadequately manned, or in an unseaworthy condition, or both. An inquiry into certain particular cases, whatever its result, cannot settle the general question whether the existing legal requirements for safety at sea are adequate, or properly enforced. But to investigate the specific instances in which the most serious charges have been made is at least a step forward.

The New Deal "Sub Judice"

Mr. Lloyd George's style was no doubt a little cramped at Newcastle by the fact that his New Deal is being examined by a committee of the Cabinet. It is neither wise nor proper to say all you think of your judges while your case is before them. But although avoiding personal attack and going into no further details of his scheme, Mr. Lloyd George did express a mild surprise that the committee which is sitting on his proposals appears to contain the Foreign Secretary and Secretary for War and not the Ministers of Transport, Agriculture, Health and Labour, who would seem to be the most interested parties. But in fact Mr. Lloyd George must know, just as we all know, that the Cabinet is not making a technical examination of his scheme: it is thinking in political terms how far it is wise to embark on a policy of public expenditure and how far to stand pat on "economy." The Cabinet is not unaware of the state of the distressed areas, but it is obsessed with the idea that capitalism can make an automatic recovery, to which Mr. Lloyd George makes the memorable reply that you can never get round the corner of a vicious circle!

Land Settlement

The Land Settlement Association, according to its Chairman, Sir Percy Jackson, has now been promised gifts and grants that are likely to amount to about £500,000 over the next three years. About half this amount is expected to come from public sources, and the Carnegie Trustees are responsible for the larger part of the remaining half; but even so the sum given privately is quite considerable. With this money, and the further half million it is hoped still to raise, the Association is setting out to create a number of land settlements consisting of small holdings—five acres at Potton, the first settlement actually at work—with a central farm under a skilled manager, and central arrangements for training the settlers and marketing their produce. On this type of holding there is of course no question of arable or general mixed farming. The men will concentrate on market gardening, poultry raising, and similar forms of high grade intensive production for accessible urban markets. On these lines they have, we believe, a chance of making good, provided the settlers are very carefully selected and the arrangements for training and marketing are of the best. At any rate, a few such experiments are well worth making. But it is a long step from this small-scale experimentation, based on careful selection and somewhat costly training, to more grandiose schemes for settling hundreds of thousands of unemployed urban workers on the land.

Education and "Economy"

The London County Council Education Estimates for the year were voted on Tuesday with the full support of the opposition, though they showed an increase of more than £800,000 over last year. Indeed, the opposition spokesman went so far as to say that they would have been much the same if his party had been in power. Half the increase is accounted for by the partial restoration of the cuts in teachers' salaries, and the other half mainly by the three-years' plan for bringing school buildings up to date and improving staffing arrangements, especially in the elementary schools. Evidently the Labour L.C.C. has decided to go very slow in the matter of education—for which there may be excuses, as London standards are in many respects ahead of most other areas. But the slow rate of advance is also attributable to the Government's policy. Mrs. Lowe, chairman of the Education Committee, pointed out that the change in the basis of Government educational grants has cost the London ratepayers £5,260,000 in four and a half years, so that the Council has had to find an extra £1,170,000 a year out of the rates. Under these conditions educational development is bound to be slowed down. The L.C.C. could perhaps have afforded to be rather more adventurous; but before they can do much to expand services they will have to restore the remaining half of the teachers' salary cut, and for that they demand a revision in the grant system.

The Brave New World at Peckham

The new Pioneer Health Centre at Peckham is a much more interesting and exciting idea than its name implies. For it is much more than a health centre; it is an extremely pleasant, up-to-date social club, which provides for the small sum of one shilling per family per week the kind of amenities which rich people pay heavily for in the West End. It is not only a place where you see the doctor to find out if you or your children need treatment, but a place where the children can play in jolly surroundings, where everyone can swim and sunbathe, where there are quiet writing rooms and comfortable sitting rooms, where you get good meals and books and a large garden, and which can accommodate 2,000 families whose members all want a fuller, healthier life than the ordinary house in a Peckham street provides. This centre follows upon the success of an experimental effort at keeping people fit which was carried out in Peckham some years ago by the two medical directors of the present health centre, Dr. Innes Pearse and Dr. Scott Williamson. Their basic ideas are explained in their book, *The Case for Action*, published by Faber and Faber, 1s. The cost of the building was raised at only 2½ per cent. interest, and with a full membership of 2,000 it is at least possible that the whole scheme may become economically self-supporting. The architect, Sir Owen Williams, is inspired; the building is beautiful in line and conception, comfortable, plain and so different from the rest of London that we cannot see how up-to-date public health authorities elsewhere can fail to copy it. What is done in Peckham may be done in Balham and Tooting, and is not beyond possibility in Islington and Plaistow.

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THE CURRENCY TANGLE

THERE is nothing like currency for making coalitions. M. Poincaré saved the franc at the head of a Government of National Union, and M. Flandin is busy saving it again to-day. The tribulations of the pound gave us our own "National" Government, which came into being in order to defend the gold standard and then promptly—and wisely—gave it up. And now an all-parties Government has been formed in Belgium, with the mission of saving the belga and seeing the country somehow through its troubles. Probably its first act as a Government will be to save the belga as our Government saved the pound—by letting it fall.

Watching the tribulations of the gold countries to-day, one is inclined to ask why they have not all followed long ago the example of Great Britain and the United States, and let the gold value of their currencies fall. The maintenance of the gold standard, at the pre-crisis parity, has involved all of them in the loss of a good deal of their export trade. They have been compelled to curtail their imports heavily, and in most cases to resort in addition to more or less drastic forms of control over foreign exchange. Some, such as Germany, have long ceased to be really on the gold standard at all. Italy has recently joined this group, and already in effect Belgium has joined it, too. Holland and Switzerland cling precariously to the gold standard in a more real sense, and France, with her huge stocks of gold, maintains it with more margin to spare. But every one of the gold bloc countries has been able to remain upon gold only at the cost of serious economic depression and unemployment. The gold bloc countries were going back economically all last year, while most others were improving their position. Why then do they so obstinately cling to the gold standard—really, while they can, and nominally even afterwards.

The answer is, partly, that there exists all over Europe a shuddering fear of inflation. France, Belgium, Germany, Poland and Italy have all experienced in varying degrees the effects of uncontrolled currency depreciation; and in all of them owners of money, as distinct from owners of things, have seen their property wholly or partly swept away. The German and French small *rentiers*, the peasants, shopkeepers, retired officials and professional men with their little savings, are all hot against any measure that would again put their incomes in jeopardy. Any party Government that depreciated the currency would do this at its peril; even the doing of it by an all-parties coalition might stimulate the growth of Fascism.

But this is not the whole explanation. If it were quite clear that the gold countries could substantially improve their economic position by depreciating their currencies, the political obstacles would almost certainly be overcome, in some of them if not in all. The Scandinavians followed us in 1931 into the sterling group; Australia, New Zealand and Canada have let the values of their monies fall. Czechoslovakia has moderately devalued the crown. Undoubtedly this has been good business for all these countries. Yet the rulers of France, Belgium, Switzerland and Holland, or of Italy and Germany, are by no means certain that it would be good business for them.

Over and above the political obstacles, there is the fear of provoking reprisals. If the gold bloc depreciates, or devalues, its money, will not President Roosevelt and Mr. Montagu Norman retaliate by depreciating yet further the dollar and the pound? Will not a race towards competitive currency depreciation be started, matching in its evil consequences the rearmament race? Moreover, if the gold countries cheapen these exports by currency depreciation, will not the countries to which they export their products answer by raising tariffs still higher, tightening up quotas and embargoes, and increasing preferences within the areas covered by special commercial treaties and agreements?

No one can pretend that these fears are groundless. By themselves, they would hardly prevail; but, added to the political difficulties, they present a powerful barrier in the way of currency depreciation. One country alone, if it were not too large to be absorbed, might indeed gain advantages by sliding out of the gold bloc into the sterling area. But the gold countries are pledged to act together; and even if one tries to break away alone it may probably bring others scurrying after it.

If that happened, it looks at first sight as if we ought to be pleased. For surely it would be a high tribute to the pound if all the gold countries came thronging into the sterling area. But actually our authorities would not welcome it at all. The sterling area has done relatively well of late precisely because it has been at an advantage over the gold bloc; and if the gold countries joined it this advantage would be lost. Even without the provocation of currency depreciation, we have just raised our tariff against Belgian steel from 33⅓ to 50 per cent. and thus greatly aggravated Belgium's difficulties. Our National Government would certainly not welcome Belgium into the sterling area on any terms that would give her a market in Great Britain for her steel. The sterling area, as matters stand, does not want recruits; it wants to be an oasis of mutual preference in a desert of gold. The gold countries on their side have tried hard to make another oasis for themselves through arrangements for the increase of their mutual trade. But save to an insignificant extent this can hardly be done. They are too deficient in complementary products.

What then is to happen? If the gold countries can hang on long enough, if President Roosevelt makes no further move to depreciate the dollar, if sterling remains roughly where it is in relation to the dollar and the franc, in the end a new equilibrium will doubtless be brought about. Dollar costs and sterling costs will gradually rise to offset the fall in the external value of the currency, and costs in the gold countries will be gradually scaled down until balance is restored. But even so, the scaling down of costs must be an unpleasant and difficult business. While it is in progress, it means wage-cuts, industrial unrest, deflation and unemployment, very probably political disturbance. Holland, under firmly orthodox financial leadership, has gone farthest with it—hence last year's riots in Rotterdam and Amsterdam. In France, on the other hand, deflation has been eased up under M. Flandin, and the attempt has been made, by rigid control of imports, to combine internal expansion with the maintenance of the currency at its fixed gold value. France, with her great reserves and financial strength, may be able to achieve this; but it is bound to retard, if not to stop altogether, the scaling down of costs. It presages rather an attempt at some future time to secure devaluation

by international agreement than a will to bring costs down to a point that will make devaluation unnecessary.

For the smaller countries such a policy of internal expansion is bound to be harder to combine with the maintenance of the gold standard. Nevertheless, this appeared at first to be the policy of the new Belgian Government, which seemed to be seeking to reconcile the preservation of the belga at an unchanged value with the expansionist economics of M. Henri de Man's *Plan du Travail*. M. de Man, who is in the new Government as a Socialist, is likely to be its key member. But already the maintenance of the belga at its old value is impossible. The belga has gone off gold of itself; and the only question is how far it is to be allowed to drop. We shall watch with interest what follows, in a country so dependent as Belgium on foreign trade.

Meanwhile, what of ourselves? All our bank chairmen asserted in their annual addresses the undesirability of a present return to the gold standard. But they might rapidly change their views if the gold bloc were driven off gold, and a general race in currency depreciation began. For in that case something would have to be done to restore at least relative stability. For our part, we should favour not a return to the gold standard in its old form—much less at the old parity—but an elastic arrangement for mutual pegging of currency values for limited periods within a fairly narrow range of fluctuation. But even for that the time is not yet, though it may come quickly if the gold bloc is forced off gold. For the moment, in face of the uncertainties of future monetary policy in Washington as well as in Europe, there is nothing for it but to keep a free hand.

THE STATE OF AUSTRIA

[FROM OUR CORRESPONDENT IN VIENNA.]

THE more international friction increases, the more critical becomes the key position of Austria. Since Germany announced her return to conscription there are those who expect to see the Reichswehr arrive in Austria before the summer is gone. But the German *démarche* of March 16th was rather brusque than revolutionary, and it synchronised with the announcement of that *rapprochement* between Jugoslavia and Italy for which the Quai d'Orsay and all other would-be saviours of Austria have been working.

The position of the Schuschnigg Government within the country is very much the same as it was six months ago. No one likes the regime much; most people frankly detest it. Even the clericals complain of Heimwehr influence on young people; and there are *dévots* who regard the new five-schilling coin, with "Magna Mater Austriae" inscribed around the figure of the Madonna and Child, as blasphemous. The economic position looks well on paper, but it helps Schuschnigg very little. A good deal of capital has been repatriated, but in spite of a recent reduction of the rate of interest from 4½ to 4 per cent.—a low record—the money somehow remains in the banks instead of being constructively invested. Moreover, the world's recovery curve is flattening out, so that there is very little prospect of further improvement for Austria. She is probably already feeling the repercussions of Italy's economic difficulties, so that an increase by ten million schillings' worth of Austrian exports to Italy in 1934 as compared with 1933 can only be regarded as a flash in the pan. Meanwhile, there are always more and more people who are no longer allowed to claim the dole, and who therefore cease to be registered as unemployed; this, together with reduced wages, is dragging down the standard of life, the lowering of which is reflected in the falling off of the tobacco revenue.

The Government has once again been making rather obscure attempts to reconcile the workers; it is possible that the independent action of Dr. Winter, the Catholic Socialist Vice-Mayor of Vienna, has been forbidden for this reason, since he is denounced as a traitor by the Marxists. A few of these would welcome some kind of conciliation in order to exploit any concessions they could extract from Schuschnigg, for they labour under terrible difficulties—the new penalties for handling illegal literature are tremendous. The general attitude of the Viennese Reds, however, is intransigent, and the programme of cutting sickness benefit, old age pensions, etc., upon which the Government is now embarking, only increases the bitter hatred which is felt for the regime. On the whole the Reds are in better spirits since Feb. 12th, 1935, for they were able to celebrate that memorable anniversary with a good deal of success. Since 1934 the factory workers had been unhappily aware that, owing to the failure of the General Strike command, the unemployed had fought and died for them. This year they carried through ten-minute or half-hour strikes in many of the big concerns in Vienna, and the light was cut off for three hours in several suburbs in the evening. There were *Blitz-Versammlungen* (which disperse like lightning when the police arrive), red flags and fireworks in many places. United front feeling is stronger and some say the Schutzbund is bigger than it ever was before. There is still, however, a struggle between those who want to keep the Schutzbund separate and purely military as it was, and those who say success demands much closer co-operation with the masses. It would, indeed, be childish to belittle the tremendous odds against the Revolutionary Socialists and Communists in Austria. They are divided in counsel; their means are inadequate, and they are without the equipment which could withstand the technical apparatus a modern government controls. The February demonstrations cost them many comrades arrested both before and after, and, each time, arrests destroy the organisation, and it must be rebuilt. The trial of Eiffler and other leaders who were arrested before Feb. 12th, 1934, was announced, by the way, for March 21st, but has now been postponed until April 3rd; it is rather doubtful whether it will take place at all.

Undoubtedly the result of the plebiscite in the Saar and the German declaration of March 16th have been received with wild enthusiasm by the Nazis in Austria. But it is unlikely that these things have brought many new recruits, and the fact remains that the Austrian Nazis have had no policy since last July, they only tease the Government with rumours. Attempts to bring about a reconciliation with the Schuschnigg Cabinet seem hitherto to have failed. Papen lives quietly, and perhaps a little thankfully, at the German Legation in the Metternichgasse. "I never lock my car when I leave it in the Metternichgasse," an Austrian friend said to me the other day, "there are so many policemen watching the German Legation that it is quite unnecessary." There is an unhappy group of Austrians, the so-called "nationally minded," who still desire a pro-German foreign policy, though *Gleichschaltung* does not appeal to them. Many of these *Grossdeutschen* went Nazi in 1933, but the survivors since then seem convinced that the Nazi way is no way to the realisation of their wishes.

There has been much cogitation over the Nazis of Upper Austria, who not long ago applied for admission *en masse* into the Patriotic Front. It was said that, once admitted, they would be all the more active. But it seems that the whole affair is the work of Gleisner, the Governor of Upper Austria, who can pretty certainly be relied upon to keep an unfriendly eye upon the converts. The Rintelen trial was well-managed by the Government, though people laugh over the life sentence and say "Oh, *lebenslänglich* only means *regierungslänglich!*" There is, too, a postcard going round with photos of the thirteen Nazis who have been executed. Yet the Nazi trials have made a bad impression, for all the accused, though patently guilty, adopted a "Please, it wasn't me" attitude—how different, people whisper, from Wallisch and Weissl, who said, "Yes,

I did that and I am proud; kill me, but not those who merely followed me."

There is one conspicuous change in Austria to-day. In the postcard shops round the cathedral in Vienna, where six months ago there were photographs only of Dollfuss, Starhemberg or Schuschnigg, one now sees the Archduke Otto in every kind of suitable costume, mostly alone, but also encircled by his family; there are even photographs of Otto with his notorious mother, the ex-Empress Zita. There are postcards also of Otto's cousin Eugene and of his unfortunate father, and there are quite a number of the old Emperor, Francis Joseph himself. On March 31st there is to be a memorial service for Kaiser Karl. People who never spoke of restoration before now tell one it seems to them the only solution. The Legitimist organisation is very cheerful; the restored monarchy is to be constitutional; it will guarantee the workers' rights, and the terrible divisions of Austria will vanish at last. A presidential election is due before the end of the year, and some people expect that the mayors, who are to choose from the nominees of the Federal Assembly, will elect a Habsburg; the Legitimists hope for a more spontaneous restoration. Now all this is very convenient by-play, but even apart from foreign opposition, Starhemberg and the fascist Heimwehr have every reason to be against a liberal monarchy, and a restoration would almost certainly provoke both Browns and Reds to violence. Abroad the Little Entente, and especially the Czechs, remain uncompromisingly hostile, and the idea has been discouraged from London; a Habsburg restoration would be furiously resented in Berlin.

The Austrian Nazis have a new rumour now, a plan for running a propagandist campaign demanding the restoration of South Tirol; they even hope for some official move from Berlin. They think to ruin Schuschnigg in this way, since he would either have to break with Italy or resist a demand which alone unites all Austrians. Certainly the German gesture of March 16th makes more articulate a feeling that Italy is withdrawing before the German drive; it is whispered that German intrigues have helped to entangle Italy in Abyssinia, so that her European activities may be paralysed.

No one, certainly, hopes anything from the Danubian Pact idea, nor will the introduction of conscription in Austria affect the situation. Quite by chance it seems, the Schuschnigg Government decreed compulsory military service for all future State employees only a few hours before the news of German conscription came from Berlin. Austria, with its Heimwehr, *Sturmscharen* and *Freiheitsbund*, not to mention the *Schutzbund* and the S.A. and S.S., is already a cross-word puzzle in private armies, and conscription would have to retain differentiated categories or the worst enemies of the State might acquire control over the weapons they most need. It would be easy to decide that Austria's doom is spelt, yet it is essentially Austrian somehow to survive when there is no good reason why one should. Only the vitality of Hitler's Third Reich may yet capture that Vienna from which the irresistible Turk was twice in history repelled.

March 24th.

A SCILLY DIARY

THOUGH I fly to the depths of the sea even there will Hitler find me. Actually I flew to the Scilly Islands where the flowers come from. They are as good as they sound. The fabulous garden at Tresco is scarcely to be believed even when seen. Knowing nothing of botany I confess that it was the beauty of these astonishing exotic plants and trees and shrubs that appealed to me rather than their rarity and the miracle of their growth in the British Isles. I can conceive of few pleasanter places for a holiday than this. What better substitute for politics could be found than beating along among these islands in a motor boat (or better still a sailing boat), looking for grey seals and puffins while the salt spray is in your hair and the wind's like a whetted knife in your face (see Masefield *passim*)? The rocks on St. Mary's Island are a black as any on the Cornish mainland and as fantastically arranged to look like tumbling castles and prehistoric monsters. Flower farming is as idyllic as it sounds, and the islanders as friendly as if you were not tourists. Altogether on a sunny day this cluster of islands surely as much deserves to be loved and sung by burning Sappho as the Isles of Greece. Yet even here I am pursued by Hitler.

* * *

Sir Kingsley Wood, they tell me, is shortly going to spoil this paradise with his beastly telephones, and an aeroplane service is threatened from the mainland. But so far there is only the wireless, and the newspapers three days a week when the boats come from Penzance. I am afraid the newspapers are read. I started talking to two sailors on the quay. One of them suggested that since Germany was so much better off now we too needed a Hitler. I asked where his information about Germany's economic state came from, and he pleaded guilty to reading newspapers. He'd got the idea that unemployment was reduced in Germany from some papers he'd been reading. . . . Did he read the *Daily Mail*? "Oh," he said, "he'd hardly like to call that a paper." The combination of the sophisticated contempt for Lord Rothermere and the naive acceptance of Lord Rothermere's propaganda was highly instructive. Anyway, he ended, conclusively but, as it seemed to me, rather irrelevantly, the Germans did love their country and Hitler must have something in him to have made them listen to him. "If I got up on that stanchion and started to speak, they'd throw me in the water! Why did they not throw Hitler in?"

* * *

Hitler followed me to lunch. At the next table to me was a commercial traveller. He overheard me mention Dick Sheppard and eagerly joined in. He had signed Sheppard's resolution never to fight in another war, and he believed that an appeal of this kind on a big scale would meet with an overwhelming response. People only needed a resolute lead. What we wanted was a pacifist leader who had learnt something from Hitler but who had none of Hitler's blood-lust and nationalism. For himself he regretted that, like many others, he had followed the line of least resistance in the last war and joined up. One of his most vivid memories was seeing a Conscientious Objector in mufti brought out on to the parade ground where he and the rest were lined up in fours. He had nearly broken ranks at the time and rushed out to wish the C.O. luck. He'd always wanted to see him again and never forgotten the incident. His wife's views were even stronger than his: the boys were getting on towards military age and she was not standing any boy-scout, flag-waving nonsense. She had rushed round and kicked up no end of a shindy at the school when the master told the boys to salute the flag. What did he think we ought to do about it? Have a League of Peoples to take the place of the League of Nations. It was obvious the Governments would do nothing. We wanted to get together with the ordinary people in other countries and make an organisation stronger than the Governments. He'd particularly noticed in the paper Mr. Maxton's remark that the worst thing about the German conscription law was that no one in Germany could criticise it. Well, we must see that we did criticise here and find a way of getting at the people who were in agreement, but not allowed to talk. Could not we fly aeroplanes over and drop leaflets as we did in the war? Anyway, we must organise a war-resistance movement which meant business. . . .

* * *

I found this extraordinarily interesting and encouraging, first because it showed that it was after all worth while to have been a conscientious objector in the last war and, secondly, because the man who expressed these views had reached them independently in a hostile atmosphere and without an ounce of theory to support him. He was not consciously a Socialist or even interested in the Labour Party. He was not a political person at all. Yet his conclusions were substantially those of a militant war resister. They were based on personal

experiences, not on books. There must be scores of thousands of men like him waiting to be told what to do.

* * *

Hitler was thrown at me next when I went into a room where the wireless was already on. I thought the news summary and comment admirably and objectively done. There was a Talk, too, about the relation of literature to society. Would it necessarily accept the urge to become part of politics, or could it resist and maintain its individualism? Could it remain under the influence of the "Liberal" Freud or must it accept the social absorption of Fascism or Communism? It was an outspoken and able Talk, but much too highbrow, I thought. I looked round. Everyone was reading a magazine or paper. I had missed the beginning of the Talk and asked who the speaker was? Not a person in the room knew or cared. The wireless was a mere background to life. Not a thing to listen to seriously. I left the company and joined the sailors in the bar. It was a great improvement. No one mentioned Hitler until closing time. I picked up a paper before going to bed and noticed that Bernard Shaw had just sailed for South Africa. I understood why.

* * *

In that surprising product of the Brave New World, the *New Yorker*, I have just read an article describing the latest thing in American housing. Bungalows fitted together like meccano sets are familiar enough, and it is no uncommon sight in the United States to see houses moving about on trucks. But this is really new. If you want a house you decide on your site and then say whether you will pay for the smallest $3,800 variety or for a larger size. (If you want to extend your house later you always can. It's just like a book-case—always complete and never finished. "You can unbutton it anywhere," said the guide, "and tack on as many rooms as you want.") In a fortnight American Houses Inc. provide the completed article. And so complete! Complete not only with all the most modern wall materials and "oil paint stencilled on parchment" washable wallpaper and the newest kind of hot air apparatus and aluminium fittings and all the rest of it, but also with food for the first three days of the honeymoon in special refrigerators and so many gadgets that it takes about six columns of the *New Yorker* to mention them. I content myself with a passage from the description of the bathroom:

> The toilet seat was equipped with a built-in scale and dial, giving one's weight whether one wanted it or not, and just beside the toilet seat was a rack of books, prepared by the house-manufacturers and designed to instruct the lucky owners of the finished house in many fields. There were volumes on interior decorating, on gardening and planting, cooking, etiquette, care of babies and the budget system. One book on the shelf was entitled *Getting the Most Out of Life in this House*.

* * *

Another reminder of the arduous pleasures of the Town was a new weekly to which I wish to offer a welcome—*London Week*, an equivalent of my old friend *La Semaine à Paris*. It provides a list of almost all the ways of spending money in London, and also of such entertainments as are free. Plays, films, concerts, salerooms, restaurants, cabarets, baths, museums, selected broadcasts, lectures, shops, and parking places are all listed with snappy and discriminating descriptions; and the general guide is written in Mr. Ogden's basic English, which translates the Anrep mosaics in the National Gallery into "floor-pictures," marble into "polished stone," and "kitchen" into "cooking-place." I acutely enjoyed the thought of all the entertainments which were safely out of my reach, the Old Masters I was unable to bid for, the First Nights I could not be seen at, the bouillabaisse I could not eat.

* * *

The post has just brought me the report of a very interesting case that came before the Clerkenwell County Court. The Judge found that the tenants of a house in Bloomsbury owned by Rugby School were entitled to redress when they found bugs in their flat. The moral of this case was that if you are going to take one of these fine but sometimes neglected flats you had better get an assurance, preferably in writing, that there are no bugs there. If you can prove such an assurance, even a verbal one, you are entitled not only to redress for money you may have fruitlessly spent in doing the place up, but also for the refund of some of your rent, since a flat with bugs in it ought to be cheaper than one without. This decision may have considerable importance to many poor people who, if they have the sense to make a fuss about bugs, may force the landlords either to do the job of fumigation properly (possible though difficult) throughout the entire house or to lower the rents to compensate for the bites.

* * *

Moses Mendelssohn (1729–1786) was the first great champion of Jewish emancipation. His family has continued to play an important part in German life: the composer was his grandson, the great Mendelssohn Bank is run by his descendants, and the youngest generation of Mendelssohns includes Eleonora, one of the finest German actresses and Francesco, who has distinguished himself both as a 'cellist and as a theatrical producer. As a recognition of the services of the Bank, the Nazis have made the grotesque decree that the Mendelssohns are "honorary Aryans." Could there be a subtler insult to a family which has always been particularly proud of its Jewish ancestry?

CRITIC

THIS ENGLAND

Our prize of 5s. for the contribution at the head of this column goes this week to Mr. Ian Munro.

All cuttings should be addressed to "This England," 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1.

My attention has been drawn to the formation in Glasgow of a branch of a movement calling itself the Open Conspiracy (H. G. Wells Society). . . . Is it not imperative that this kind of cosmopolitanism should be crushed in its infancy—and what more fitting time than this Jubilee year of 1935?

Let the people of this country unite in saying God Save the King, long live democracy and our Empire.—Letter in the *Glasgow Daily Record*.

Major E. B. Robinson, the officer commanding the East Yorks Regiment, believes that the morale of his troops will be improved if they sleep in pyjamas.—*Sunday Express*.

"This is Jubilee year," he went on, "and those who desire to pay their respects and compliments to the King should do so by showing a little more regard for their attire in the Row. Such a gesture, I venture to think, would be acceptable to his Majesty and the public generally"—Sir Walter Gilbey, reported in the press.

George Duller has been telling me that he has found a successful diversion for his horses during the afternoon. The top half of each stable door is left open and the wireless is switched on at a window looking on to the yard.

The horses, he says, show marked and sustained interest in the programme, but as far as he can judge they prefer music to talks.—Capt. Eric Rickman in *Daily Mail*.

Mr. Janner blamed chiefly conditions resulting from unemployment, which made the women suffer most, and Mr. G. A. Griffiths quoted from Sir George Newman's report to show that special diet was essential, but that the unemployed could not afford it. The Opposition thus failed to respond to Mr. J. P. Thomas's appeal to keep health matters outside politics.—The *Times*.

I have repeatedly emphasised the appalling risk from the giant gasometers that are erected in our populous centres. Now it so happens that planetary configurations are in force which greatly increase risk of accidental explosion and conflagration in such places.—Article in *Sunday Express*.

Beneath the thin ice of civilisation the killer shark circles the blubbering whale. The world grows worse, not better; while the Green Hell of the Chaco, written in letters of blood and oil, squats like some giant toad on the brow of the angel of peace.—Letter in *Kent and Sussex Courier*.

THE NATIONAL PEACE BALLOT

VISCOUNT CECIL'S APPEAL

WE have received the following letter from Viscount Cecil :—

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—The Peace Ballot has been a great success. Millions have answered the questions, and to enable themselves to do so have given serious thought to the subject. Indeed, the interest excited among the masses of the people has been most remarkable.

Local organisation has been provided in each constituency by many thousands of devoted volunteers and by local funds. But there remain the expenses of the central office, mainly for the cost of printing many millions of ballot papers and explanatory documents. Our liabilities should not exceed £12,000, and I hope to keep them down to £11,000, which is a small figure both in relation to the immensity of the work and the value of the results. Towards this sum we have already received about £5,600 in sums of money from 2*s.* 6*d.* up to £500 and more.

It is, however, a matter of some anxiety to secure the balance within the next few weeks. We are precluded from appealing to the localities which have already taken on a heavy local liability. Nothing could be less spectacular than an appeal for central expenses to meet printing bills and clerical expenditure, yet nothing is more necessary. May I express the hope that your readers will help to provide the balance? Putting aside criticisms of details, will any candid person deny that the Peace Ballot is by far the most effective means for waking public opinion which has yet been devised? I believe that this Fund has a strong claim on the generosity of all those who believe that the success of the League of Nations or any other organised system of peace must rest on the support of instructed public opinion.

Donations should be sent to Viscount Cecil, 15 Grosvenor Crescent, S.W.1. CECIL

We believe that this appeal will meet with a ready response from readers of the NEW STATESMAN AND NATION, who, however great their other differences, are likely to agree with Lord Cecil that the Peace Ballot has been an extraordinarily valuable means of waking and educating public opinion upon international issues. The latest figures show that the ballot in sixty-eight complete constituencies has reached practically the whole adult population of these areas, that in many cases more than 60 per cent. of the electorate has voted, while the average poll is about 50 per cent. For some reason which we will not attempt to explain, the largest polls so far have come from Lancashire, where Rossendale heads the list with a 72 per cent. vote, with Nelson, Colne and Bury coming close behind. As it happens the smallest poll also comes from Lancashire: Barrow shares with Exeter and Canterbury the distinction of being one of the only three towns with less than a 30 per cent. poll. The results are now coming in at a great pace. The figures in the chart below are already out of date. The latest returns this week show over four million replies to Question I.

The Peace Ballot owes something to Lord Rothermere and more to Lord Beaverbrook, both of whom set the example by organising ballots to show that this country wanted no more truck with the League of Nations. How utterly they misinterpreted British public opinion may be seen from the chart. This shows the proportions of votes given to the five questions and makes clear at a glance the overwhelming majority in favour of a League policy and against isolationism, "splendid" or otherwise. Indeed the results in the case of Question I might be read as showing that the only opponents of the League in the country were Lord Beaverbrook and his hundred thousand!

We believe that most of our readers will agree with Lord Cecil that £11,000 is a small figure when we consider the size of the undertaking, which has involved, apart from other expenses, the printing and distribution of about 16,000,000 ballot papers. More than half this sum has already been received. But the remaining £5,400 is urgently needed and we should like to add our appeal to that of Lord Cecil, to whom contributions should be sent at 15 Grosvenor Crescent, S.W 1

THE PEACE BALLOT—How the First Three and a Half Million Voted

("Yes" and "No" Answers Only) (1 Man represents 100,000 Votes)

Question		Votes Cast
1 For the League of Nations.	YES	3,564,101 (97·3%)
	NO	100,254 (2·7%)
2 For All-round Disarmament	YES	3,358,295 (92·8%)
	NO	261,663 (7·2%)
3 For Abolition of Naval and Military Aircraft.	YES	3,065,345 (85·3%)
	NO	526,386 (14·7%)
4 For Abolition of Private Manufacture of Arms.	YES	3,328,267 (93·2%)
	NO	243,094 (6·8%)
5A For Economic Action against Aggressor Nation.	YES	3,172,243 (94·1%)
	NO	197,834 (5·9%)
5B For Military Action against Aggressor Nation.	YES	2,103,641 (73·0%)
	NO	765,259 (27·0%)

MARKETING SCHEMES

[At the conclusion of his article, "Milk," in our issue of March 9th, Mr. L. F. Easterbrook invited the views of experts on the subsidy policy of the Marketing Boards. In the following article an economist responds to the invitation.—ED. *N.S. & N.*]

MARKETING schemes are developing into a new, subtle and vicious form of taxation, and have proved a godsend to a government which wishes to trade on its reputation for economy and at the same time distribute largesse to sectional interests. The history of the schemes in this country is indissolubly linked up with the problems of public finance, but the case for them has been developed quite independently, so that a wholesale transfer of fiscal burdens from the rich to the poor is in process without exciting any opposition, but rather the approbation, of the representatives of the latter. The process can be illustrated by a general application to sugar of the various devices which have characterised marketing schemes to date.

The Sugar Beet subsidy was granted in 1925 on general agricultural and social considerations and, while the sectional advantage conferred by it was too obvious to be overlooked, the case has always been supported by representing the measure as one in the interests of the national economy at large. The maintenance of a vigorous agricultural population, the provision and stabilisation of employment, the peace-time precaution against war emergencies, are some of the considerations urged in favour of the grant. If these arguments are accepted by the electorate there is no case against putting this charge on the Budget and meeting the cost by the accepted canons of taxation, just as a battleship is provided for the national defence. Citizens *qua* citizens bear the cost of a national service.

But a subsidy standing naked in the finance accounts is subject to continuous challenge, in circumstances which attract undue publicity. The harassed taxpayer looking desperately for relief lends too attentive an ear to critics who question the wisdom and value of a particular policy and reinforce their arguments by such indecent calculations as that the taxpayer would be in pocket if he pensioned off the whole industry, bought the sugar from abroad and gave it away free. When a crisis supervenes and all-round sacrifices are exacted, it becomes still more difficult for a government of financial purists to retain such an item, but if the purists are at the same time enthusiastic protectionists equally difficult to abolish it. The solution is a change of nomenclature and address reminiscent of company finance. The Treasury floats a subsidiary with offices round the corner and thereby removes the transaction from the accounts of the parent company. No amalgamated balance sheet is published and, even if disgruntled shareholders detect the movement, no discussion is in order at the annual general meeting in April.

This is precisely what has occurred in the case of wheat and is being advocated in the case of sugar. A subsidiary board is given power to make a levy and to distribute the proceeds to home producers. The important difference is that this levy is collected from the citizen not in his capacity as taxpayer but as consumer. The levy, which is the old subsidy writ large, is no longer raised by the principles governing the general raising of revenue, but on an independent basis which would probably be rejected if it formed part of a unified fiscal programme. The diabetic surtax payer (who admittedly had a grievance when his insulin was taxed) no longer contributes to what is claimed to be a national service; on the other hand, the large family bears an added burden. The subsidy goes on in this disguise, but as far as the national accounts are concerned an actual decrease in expenditure is recorded. The levy may be actually collected at the ports or in bonded warehouses and through the agency of the Customs and Excise in precisely the same way as "official" taxation is collected, but it will not be shown in the fiscal statistics.

The temptation to a government to disguise its exactions in this way must be overwhelming. If it is anxious to give a dole to an industry, why should it incur the odium of extravagance and lay itself open to recurring criticism and attack, when by transferring the matter to an *ad hoc* authority it can execute the transaction behind the scenes and only raise the curtain at long intervals? If you mulct the citizen as taxpayer he bites; if you rook him as consumer he licks your hand. What he doesn't see doesn't hurt him.

If the beauty of this compromise has dawned upon the administration, it has also appealed to industry. No enlightened industry now appeals for a subsidy; it asks for a scheme. It loftily repudiates any desire to batten on the public funds; it merely requires statutory powers to tap the private pocket, and a wily Treasury, conscious of the inspiration it lent to the May Report, is only too anxious to see the records of its proclivities expelled from the blue-books and swallowed up in the domestic grocery bill.

If the process stopped at this point, the fundamental change in the principles and methods of financing governmental aid to industry would need to be challenged; but a marketing scheme provides further opportunities for fiscal jugglery which piles regression upon regression in the distribution of the burden. For a scheme is a selling cartel with monopoly powers, and it can employ all the devices associated with monopoly control. In particular it can exercise discrimination and split up the market on a classification most favourable to the exaction of monopoly revenue. A Sugar Board need not stop, as the Wheat Board has done, at a flat levy on every hundredweight. With central control of supplies it can allocate between the various uses and users of the commodity and charge a different price in each field. This is a powerful instrument which can be employed for different ends. As part of the general social policy of a democratic community it could be used to modify inequality, at the same time encouraging the production of the staples of existence. For example, higher prices charged to the well-to-do would furnish a margin for subsidising cheap supplies to the poor. Our marketing schemes have flirted with this device in so far as they have provided cheap supplies to elementary school children and contemplated similar concessions to the unemployed. Something like the same results could be obtained by discriminating between the uses of the commodity, if the segregation could be strictly imposed in practice. A low price for sugar in the form suitable for common consumption could be carried by the higher prices charged for luxury uses. But what could be said in defence of an arrangement which reversed this discrimination to make it work in favour of higher incomes and less urgent uses, which in effect iced the ceremonial cake and sweetened liqueurs by a toll on the poorest breakfast tables?

In the light of all this we can examine the panegyric on the Milk Board delivered by Mr. L. F. Easterbrook. The inherent evils and weaknesses of this scheme appear to Mr. Easterbrook as incidental or temporary shortcomings—teething troubles he calls them. He does not bring out the point that the post-war struggle between producers and distributors has been resolved by giving both parties what they want at the expense of the consumer. He merely records the rise in price to the farmer (to a level, be it noted, out of all relation to recent movements in the prices of other foodstuffs), and later on deplores the size of the distributive margin. He does not record the fact that, if the distributors' powers were excessive in relation to the producers and the public, those powers were on the point of weakening when the Milk scheme came in to bolster them up. He apparently does not realise the fundamental force of his criticism "that while the Board has made the distributors' job easier, retail milk is generally dearer than before the Board came into existence." He has an uncomfortable feeling that the right way to encourage the consumption of liquid milk is to lower the price, but he balks at any independent action which might contribute to that end. The fact, acknowledged by Mr. Easterbrook, that hundreds of areas have already availed themselves of the power to reduce the minima shows the absurdity of the attempt to calculate and establish uniform distributive margins, and what is true between areas is true between individual producers. If

Mr. Easterbrook had studied the scheme as a selling cartel, he could have applied the known experience of this form of organisation. Of course the uniform price favours the lower-cost and favourably-placed producers, and these are given an incentive to expand output. According to Mr. Easterbrook the West is favoured in this respect and milk production is moving westwards, the change threatening to drive other areas out of business. He does not see the logical outcome of this, namely, that the end result will merely be a transfer of revenue from one set of landlords to another, but he does see the logical remedy, i.e., producers' quotas to stereotype the existing distribution of dairy farming. All our schemes for industry lead up to this. They can only be kept intact by allocating output on the basis of past results, by strict limitation of expansion and by rigid exclusion of new entrants. This has been done with coal and hops; it can be done with shipping and steel. Can it be done with three million cows?

Finally, Mr. Easterbrook says nothing about the policy of price discrimination. He does not explain how the wide discrepancy between the price of liquid milk and the price of milk for manufactures emerged during the post-war manoeuvring between producers and distributors, nor does he question the desirability or possibility of making this price-spread a permanent feature of the market. He does not even comment upon the order of the discrimination. No discussion of the scheme should omit to present this in full.

Milk.	Wholesale price per gallon. s. d.
For liquid consumption	1 4
Manufactured into butter .. .. } Based on prices of Canadian	
,, ,, cheese .. .. } and New Zealand cheese.	
,, ,, soft curd and cream cheese ..	7½
,, ,, condensed milk	6
,, ,, condensed milk for export ..	4
,, ,, milk powder	4½
,, ,, fresh cream	7½
,, ,, tinned cream	5
,, ,, ice-cream	7½
,, ,, chocolate	8
Natural sterilised milk for export	6
Milk manufactured into other products	9

And all out of the same udder!

This arrangement is eminently designed to encourage the use of artificial ivory umbrella handles by the poor, and the rearing of infants on hokey-pokey and éclairs; but—name of a cow with a crumpled horn—it is supposed to further the consumption of liquid milk! It should give the Soviets a good laugh at bourgeois planning.

Mr. Easterbrook says that the experiment may have far-reaching results. He is right about that. He says that no one as yet has taken much notice of it. He is right about that. He asks for views on the principle involved, the desirability of the experiment, and the scope for applying it to other commodities.

The scope is only limited by the supply of Elliots—and one is born every minute. The principle involved is that of converting the economic system into a glorified sweepstake. The desirability depends upon your power of affecting the draw.

G. L. SCHWARTZ

BREAD-EATERS

ACCORDING to Sir Charles Higham, the advertising campaign to persuade the public to eat more bread has been "an overwhelming success." That, surely, is significant of the power of advertisement over the modern mind. I myself, presumably, do not possess a modern mind, for, so far as I can judge, I eat exactly the same amount of bread in March, 1935, as I ate in March, 1934. If I eat an extra slice of bread-and-butter at tea-time, it is because I want it, not because I have read an advertisement. I should have thought that bread-eating was so ancient and universal a custom that everybody already indulged in it to the limits of his desires or capacity. Evidently, however, there were hundreds of thousands of people who were not doing their duty as bread-eaters. For reasons of health or of beauty, they had ceased to look upon the bread when it was white. In fear of fatness, women who could easily afford the best bread on the market began to starve, not only themselves, but the wives and children of millers and bakers. The slimming habit grew, and it became almost impossible to sell so much as a penny roll to a millionairess. If the slimming habit spread from the rich to all ranks of society, the bakeries saw that bankruptcy would soon be staring them in the face. Hence, like the fruiterers, the butchers, and the brewers, the millers and bakers turned for salvation to publicity.

Their methods of advertising were simple, but none the less effective on that account. A photograph of a beautiful actress was published alongside her confession that she ate bread fearlessly and was all the better for it. Immediately, a million women and girls who longed to become as beautiful as the actress began to wonder whether, if they ate as much bread as she, they might hope one day to rival her in her beauty. They associated beauty with bread-eating in their imaginations, and buns began to disappear down a million throats at an unprecedented rate. And, having begun to eat bread again for idealistic reasons, the women found that they not only liked it, but loved it. Imagine the ecstatic joy of a woman who tastes her first crumpet after having sternly forbidden herself crumpets for months—perhaps, for years. What a flavour a toasted tea-cake must have for a woman who suddenly realises that not abstinence but self-indulgence is the secret of the good life. Since the campaign in favour of bread-eating began, many a female heart in many a London suburb must have beaten faster at the sound of the muffin-bell. The muffin-man was no longer the enemy, the purveyor of fatness, but the angelic friend, the bringer of bread and of beauty.

It is not only to women, however, I understand, that the great bread campaign has restored the liberty of eating. Many men, too, had been brought up in unnatural fear of the big bad loaf. They had been warned by their doctors against starchy foods, and had sought refuge from adiposity in abstinence from bread and potatoes. How rapturously they must have welcomed the photograph of the international footballer in the advertisement and the accompanying announcement that he and his fellow-players were devoted to bread and that there was not an ounce of superfluous flesh to be found on the entire team. At once bread became associated in the imagination with perfect physical fitness, and fattened stockbrokers began to order in extra supplies of loaves in the hope that by the end of a few weeks they would be capable of playing centre forward for England. The director of an insurance company, devouring his third roll at lunch, would say to himself: "This will be good for my golf handicap." The theatrical manager, gobbling his fifth éclair at tea, would feel that he was preparing himself for such feats at squash as history has not yet recorded. Everywhere, men who a little while previously had thought of themselves as invalids, began to regard themselves as athletes in training merely because they were indulging in orgies of bread-eating.

I was certainly wrong in thinking that human beings could not be induced by advertisements to eat more bread. I had forgotten how low the habit of bread-eating had sunk in the past generation—how the bread-eating instinct looked, indeed, as if it were beginning to wane. It was not only the fault of the doctors and the beauty specialists. Social custom itself became the enemy of bread. Bread, indeed, as the dominant food of man, was threatened from the moment at which the middle classes all over the country acquired the taste for a late dinner. After all, the human appetite is limited. Sate it with fish and meat and such things, and it cannot possibly go on craving for the right amount of bread. No one who eats a substantial meat-lunch and meat-dinner can do his duty as a bread-eater. The cocktail party habit again has helped to make tea with its breadstuffs a meal for a fairy. Even the most resolute stomach requires a rest at some hour of the day, and, owing to the ravages of civilisation, many

people nowadays find it most convenient to give the stomach a rest at tea-time. This, it seems to me, means decadence and the sooner we return for strength to the example of our primitive forefathers the better. Painters, after all, have gone back again and again to the primitive in search of a renewal of vitality. Why should not eaters do the same? Bread-eating is a habit as old as the Stone Age, and it seems to me that any habit that has lasted as long as that among good men and women must have a very great deal to be said for it.

Perhaps, I am not entirely unprejudiced on the subject, for I was brought up a bread-eater. The morning glory of that thick slice of bread, butter and jam that was the child's portion between breakfast and the mid-day meal still whets the imagination. Later, at school, when the bell rang for the afternoon recess, it was to the bread-stored tuckshop that a horde of flying boys raced each other, each striving to get there first, as if competing for an Olympic crown. I was never much of a runner, but I have broken records in running for a bun. Who could imagine such pard-like swiftness in pursuit of a beef-steak? I do not wish to say anything in disparagement of beef, chicken and fish, but I maintain that to the unspoiled imagination of boyhood these things are the veriest prose of food in comparison with the poetry of cakes and buns. If I stayed during childhood at the house of a stranger, I did not judge him by what he fed me with at dinner, but by what he gave me at tea. At dinner, I accepted the meat-course as a normal means of satisfying hunger, but I felt no excitement at sight of a sirloin. It was only at tea that the lust of the eye began to wander shamelessly round the table, craving to be able to eat far more than I felt I should be able to eat, baked breads, buns, hot buttered tea-cakes, sweet cakes. Even while I ate a portion of tea-cake, I was already thinking of the next, or of what I was going to eat next.

A tea-table in those days had often as great a variety of excitements as a garden. The baked breads—soda, wheaten, and Indian meal—hot from the oven, steeped in melted butter, and with a layer of any jam one asked for, were only a prelude to the meal. They were but the first course in a feast of cakes, each of which stirred in the heart emotion recollected long after in tranquillity.

Will such gastric joy ever be restored to the world again? Will slim-cake ever be given back its right place in civilisation? Will the time ever come again when the mouth of humanity will water at the mention of shortbread? I do not see how this can happen till we have abandoned our slavery to meat dishes. To-day the gourmets despise the baker's wares; and the Food and Wine Society, which has made many interesting experiments in appetising meals, has not yet, so far as I can discover, thought of offering its members an old-fashioned farm-house tea, a birthday tea. It would be an excellent thing if the millers and bakers brought their influence to bear on the Food and Wine Society to organise such a banquet. Now that we know from the advertisements that bread does us no harm—that, indeed, it will make us as beautiful as actresses and as fit as footballers—there is no reason why we should not enjoy reverting to the bread-eating, cake-eating, habits of an earlier world. "Live according to Nature," advised the old philosophers, and to-day we can hear Nature as well as the millers and bakers calling on us to "Eat More Bread."

Y. Y.

Correspondence

THE KIDNAPPING OF HERR JACOB

SIR,—In your article on "Hitler's Challenge" in the last number of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION, you seem to envisage the possibility that Germany might rest content, now that she has revived a large army based on compulsory service and so satisfied her craving for equality. This reflects the conviction, often expressed by supporters of Hitler and commonly heard in this country, that the National-Socialist regime signifies no more than the desire of the German nation to regain its self-respect.

The kidnapping of the journalist Berthold Jacob comes as a timely warning to those who still cling to ideas so touching in their simplicity. It makes it perfectly plain to those who still have the good will and honesty to recognise the true temper of the National-Socialist regime that we have here a wild creature that is not yet tamed; and a good many will conclude that it never can be tamed.

In the days when German rearmament was not yet carried on openly, it was screened behind a veil of blood and violence. On October 22nd, 1921, the *Times* correspondent reported that four hundred murders had been committed in order to conceal these military preparations from the public. This was merely the first stage of what in Germany was known as the epidemic of *Feme* murders. Of all those who helped in the suppression of this plague, not a single one is left as a free man in Germany to-day. You may take this literally; all, without exception, of those who fought for Germany's moral regeneration, are to-day dead, or imprisoned, or in exile.

But, as you see from the case of Jacob, not even emigration can save a man from imprisonment and death. To trap this untiring enemy of the *Feme* murderers and their powerful backers, a vast, expensive machine was called into play—a corrupt renegade from the Left, spies in the various capitals of Europe, disguised agents of the Gestapo, motor-cars, chloroform masks and, of course, well-primed frontier officials. Coming after the cases of Bell, Rotter, Lessing and Formis, this last case, perhaps the most tragic of them all, shows that since Hitler's assumption of power the *Feme* has become an integral part of the mechanism of the German State and that it is not only within Germany's frontiers that it is able to ensnare its victims.

One should perhaps do more than examine the Notes and speeches of the leading statesmen to grasp the true character of a regime. Small points will generally help one to arrive at a more accurate diagnosis. But for the time being this magnanimous world of ours seems to be willing to pass over mere trifling violations of foreign territorial rights, not to mention the regrettable, but (as far as high politics are concerned) unimportant sacrifice of human lives affecting, as it does, a community so insignificant as that of the emigrés. As long as we, and with us Berthold Jacob, still fought against the *Feme* murders, we acted because we believed that from isolated murders another bath of blood might spring. Europe to-day seems far removed from this prophetic vein!

RUDOLF OLDEN

[Our envisaging of the possibility referred to in the first sentence of this letter obviously did not indicate a belief that "the National-Socialist regime signifies no more than the desire of the German nation to regain its self-respect." We have constantly recorded our view of the character of that regime and of its infamies, of which the latest is the kidnapping of Berthold Jacob.—ED. *N.S. & N.*]

WAR AND CAPITALISM

SIR,—I am sure I should find myself in agreement with Norman Angell in formulating the main lines of a practical foreign policy, under present conditions, for a British Socialist Government—and, incidentally, it would be a policy likely to commend itself to a Marxist of the name of Litvinov. None the less, re-reading the letter from Angell which appeared in your issue of February 23rd, I venture, as a pigmy invited to take part in this "battle among the giants," to put forward one major criticism.

I feel that all the way through his letter he missed one important point in the Marxist argument, at any rate as I see it. I don't think intelligent Marxists deny that war is not in the interests of the capitalist class as a whole; they admit, that is to say, that it does not pay all the capitalists all over the world. No doubt there are capitalists who realise this, who are also philosophers (*pace* Professor Laski's letter), who take long views, who read Angell's books. Nevertheless even these self-same capitalists may act in ways which bring about war. For this reason: just as a motorist may keep his eyes on the speedometer and not on the road, and therefore have a head-on collision, so capitalists may involve capitalism in an awful smash up through keeping their eyes fixed on the speedometer of profits instead of on the road of world politics—and, incidentally, in the ensuing collision one car may be less damaged than the other.

Admittedly a wise motorist will keep his eyes on the road as well as on the speedometer. But for the ordinary business man, even if he does happen to be politically minded, politics must be

mainly a spare-time occupation. It is the indicator of profits in his own particular business that governs his day-to-day actions. If he is making profits, then he thinks all's well with the world. That being so, he may follow the indicator of profits in his own business until he reaches a point where it indicates that he should merge that business into a national monopoly. That monopoly may well be so powerful as to be able to influence the policy of the national State. It may influence the State to use in its turn its power to annex, and monopolistically exploit, some undeveloped area in which it is possible to sell very high and buy very low. But, in a world where there are increasingly few areas of that kind to be had for the taking, that particular area may be coveted by some other national sovereign State with a similar industrial order. Hence, "a charge of gunpowder or a whiff of poison-gas."

Angell may argue that this proves his point, that the cause of the trouble is not capitalism, but national sovereignty. If the capitalists of the two countries could only be got to realise that war was not in the interest of either in the long run, they would step over their national boundaries and come to some common-sense agreement to share the profits to be derived from the joint exploitation of the undeveloped area concerned.

I have an idea that Lenin himself said as much—that if the dominating capitalists of the world could be got together round a table they could come to some arrangement for parcelling it out economically in such a way as to prevent war. Such a state of affairs would amount to a realisation in practice of what I understand to be Kautsky's theory of ultra-imperialism. The difficulty in the way of bringing it about is, of course, the difficulty of so uprooting capitalists from their customary ways of thinking as to persuade them to accomplish the step across national boundaries. That is where Angell and Woolf come in. If they *can* persuade them to do that, well and good. I claim to be a Socialist by almost any definition that any Marxist would like to propound, and because I believe that making the world safe from war is an essential preliminary to making the world safe for Socialism, I cannot object if the process also happens temporarily to involve making it safe for capitalism.

But it is all important to note the prior stages of the capitalist with his eyes fixed on the indicator of profits and of the national monopoly. This means that the economic fact of capitalism is as important as the political fact of national sovereignty in causing war. It should go without saying that there would not be international war but for national sovereignty; must we not also grant that national sovereignty would not be such a militarist danger but for the fact of economic rivalry, the result of capitalism?

What I finally want to stress is the point of the capitalist following blindly and automatically the indicator of profits; he seldom consciously thinks in this matter of the interests of capitalism as a whole. Thus "Critic" said: "The capitalist impulse to obtain new markets and raw materials may often be self-destructive and yet continue to the end. Capitalism may be the cause of war and yet not benefit by war." Brailsford admitted that wise capitalists rarely desire war, but are "compelled to rely on the military power of the national State, which in a competitive world must one day spell war." Later he repeated this point when he wrote that war "may be ruinous and even fatal to the capitalist society that engages in it, and yet it will follow from the drive to monopoly in a world of competing imperial units." Is there no possibility of Angell accepting the view of the capitalist causation of war which I have tried to outline and to illustrate by these quotations?

FRANK HARDIE

82 Ladbroke Road, W.11.

HOSPITALS

SIR,—It is always very difficult to deal with charges made by an anonymous correspondent against an unnamed institution, especially when the institution happens to be a hospital. But I cannot help feeling that the statements made by your contributor in your last issue are much exaggerated. In any event, I claim that if it is intended to suggest that similar conditions exist in the majority of our London hospitals the picture is an inaccurate and distorted one. Those who are acquainted with the organisation and supervision of any London hospital to-day know that such matters as cleanliness and punctuality are paramount, and to me some of the statements made by your correspondent are almost incredible. He seems to imagine that hospitals are controlled and conducted by the doctors and nurses, oblivious of the fact that every London hospital has a Board of Management, and numerous officials including secretaries, matrons and ward sisters who are daily in touch with the work which goes on in the wards, and to whom any complaint of the kind made by your correspondent would have immediate attention.

It is satisfactory to note the admission of your correspondent that he owes his life to the skill and attention of the surgeons and nurses, although he seems to have a curious way of showing his gratitude, as, except for this reluctant but, I should have thought, all-important admission he has nothing but condemnation for everything and everybody. It is to be hoped that he found at the expensive nursing home to which he hastily removed the attention and consideration to which he considered he was entitled.

The P.S. which follows your correspondent's article obviously overlooks the facts I have mentioned, and in particular that a word from the lady to the matron or secretary of the hospital would have ensured immediate attention to her complaints.

HERBERT S. SYRETT,
Vice-Chairman,
National Temperance Hospital

2 John Street,
Bedford Row, W.C.1.

O.T.C.s

SIR,—Your comments headed O.T.C.s in last week's issue are incorrect and misleading. The recommendation from the Education Committee to the London County Council dealt with Cadet Corps in maintained Council Secondary Schools, and these the Council have decided to prohibit, not to "withdraw support" as your commentator says. With regard to the aided Secondary Schools where the Council has no power to prohibit, a pious hope is expressed that they will follow in line.

Neither during the debate at the Education Committee nor at the Council itself was the argument used—as is suggested—that Cadet Corps were valuable training for defence, nor was stress laid upon the physical training they give. What was emphasised by myself and other speakers who voted for the reasoned amendment was that Cadet Corps could give an educational value in self-discipline which had proved in many cases to be of real assistance to growing boys.

ERIC HALL

The Bath Club,
34 Dover Street, W.1.

SMOKING AT THE B.B.C.

SIR,—As director of the film, *Death at Broadcasting House*, reviewed in your columns last week, will you permit me space to deal with two alleged inaccuracies in production. Your reporter, in search of inaccuracies, has meandered into the meadows of inaccuracy himself. He questions the fact that Announcers smoke in front of the microphone and that during rehearsals electric light burns in studios. The actor who played the part of the Announcer was Mr. Eric Dunstan, himself an Announcer for some considerable time at Broadcasting House. It was Mr. Dunstan who suggested that he should light a cigarette—a thing he always did as he made his final announcement.

Regarding lights in the studios during rehearsals, had your reporter rehearsed in those "funk-holes" as many times as Mr. Val Gielgud, the Director of Dramatic Productions who vetted *Death at Broadcasting House*, or myself, he would not have blundered on this point also.

As to the photography, of which apparently your reporter disapproves, he is, of course, entitled to his opinion. It is unusual to find THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION inaccurate in matters of taste.

REGINALD DENHAM, Director

A PROTEST

SIR,—During the past few days the daily press has given considerable publicity to the fact that it is the intention of the writers of this letter to be married. We have no idea who supplied them with this information and whoever did so acted in direct opposition to the wishes of both of us.

Apparently, the sole reason why this announcement is considred to have any news-value is the fact that one of us is a University teacher and the other a taxi-cab driver. May we ask you to publish this letter as a protest against the disgusting snobbishness of a society which finds these facts as of the slightest public interest? Along with other victims of similar publicity we have no other means of redress for this exploitation of our private affairs than the support of papers which, like yours, are concerned to establish decent standards of social equality and public taste.

BARBARA WOOTTON
GEORGE P. WRIGHT

25 Hampstead Hill Gardens,
N.W.3.

Miscellany

FATE AND THE SUBCONCIOUS

THE Stage Society has good reason to congratulate itself both on the choice and on the performance of M. Jean Cocteau's version of *Oedipus Rex, The Machine of the Gods*. During the last few years it has been crossing a desert of public indifference. Subscribers have fallen off, and (most discouraging) some of the Society's enthusiastic supporters in the past have been saying that its work was done. If it had not been for one man . . . but its members know well what they owe to Mr. Kennedy. Such a Society is still important to the English Stage, and how it can vivify and enlarge interest in drama in London (still too lethargic and narrow) was well shown this week at the Grafton Theatre. What the public saw there was a version of one of the oldest plays in the world—and something new, something stimulating to modern stage-craft. Incidentally, they also saw two actresses and one actor in parts which displayed them at their best. Miss Margaret Webster as Jocasta, Miss Ursula Jeans as The Sphinx, Mr. William Devlin as Oedipus (in his first scene I thought I was not going to admire him), exhibited talents such as producers are often at a loss to discover. The immediate reward of actors who give their services to the Stage Society is small. It lies almost entirely in the opportunity of learning their art, of testing their scope, and perhaps—if managers know their business—in making an impression on those who have parts to give away.

Aristotle considered *Oedipus Rex* the prime example of dramatic tragedy. But as Mr. F. L. Lucas has said, we go to Aristotle now not for the right answers to aesthetic questions, but to learn what are the right questions to put. The idea of Destiny was the focus of Greek tragedy; Sophocles accepted it as a tradition and as a fact. His last word on life is " Look, wonder and think."

> Aeschylus had justified the ways of God to man, and vindicated law. Euripides, finding neither God nor law, but only burning instincts on the one hand and destructive thought on the other, launches out into a restless search that has no starting-point and no goal. Sophocles does not affect to explain life; he hardly criticises it. He shows things happening and how they happen, but not why. If he accepts conventions, it is because they are actual facts; they exist, and are among the motive forces of the world. If he seems to lack moral imagination, it is because morality is not with him a separate thing, with boundaries at which imagination can stop. Morals and religion are to him neither the foundations nor the superstructure; they are elements or functions of the one amazing and incomprehensible thing, the one thing that matters, the one thing that is—life. (*Lectures on the Greek Poets*, T. W. Mackail.)

There is a blank obviousness, a curious flatness—I do not say for scholars who have brooded over and studied these plays, but for the modern spectator—in their conclusions. Recall the closing lines of *Oedipus Rex*, " Therefore wait to see life's ending before you call any man happy; wait till free from pain he has won his final rest." Good heavens, we exclaim, is *that* all it comes to, this horrible story of a gallant Prince, doomed at birth to kill his father, marry his mother, who after many years brought a curse on his people whom he had ruled well, then put out his own eyes and wandered away? This threadbare commonplace, that disaster may overtake at last even the most fortunate man, is that the upshot? Of course it is not all. There is also conveyed a sense that man though great is helpless; that he is the plaything of the gods and yet divine. Any version of this story of ineluctable fate must therefore also communicate that. M. Cocteau, as the title of his variations on the theme of Oedipus shows, has grasped this firmly. For the rest, *The Machine of the Gods* is a psychological fantasia. His play in detail is not Greek. Yet the dramatist has managed to preserve the essential Greek thing, the sense of a Destiny which cannot be read by its victims and the awe which so dark a mystery inspires. But meanwhile he has amused and intrigued our imaginations with matters which are more familiar to them than the stark contemplation of Fate after the manner of Sophocles. He has brought out the odd, naive, folk-lore elements in the story of the Sphinx with her ridiculous riddle about the animal that first goes on four legs, then on two, and finally on three. M. Cocteau has the invention of a fairy-story teller. (That was clearly seen, too, in *Orphée*.) He knows how gladly the imagination yields itself to the improbable if it is presented with matter-of-fact boldness as in folk-lore, or for the matter of that in miracle-stories. Our imaginations are still in part those of children, and the dramatist should take advantage of it. Such incidents are only charming and convincing on the stage when taken for granted. Don't, therefore, fuss about creating an atmosphere of wonder; the wonders themselves will do that. That I believe is M. Cocteau's dramatic discovery. He has taken a hint from the old story-tellers who used to say to our complete satisfaction in childhood, " And the witch said, ' Become a toad '; and she became a toad." Why not?

Oedipus Rex opens with the plague at Thebes and the search for the guilty Jonah responsible for that public calamity—with the *dénouement* of the story in fact. M. Cocteau opens with a ghost scene reminiscent of the battlements of Elsinor, where the ghost of Oedipus' father vainly attempts to warn his wife, Jocasta, against the plot prepared by the gods. Then it shifts to the Sphinx, who is a beautiful girl, at least to all who meet her wandering at night in the woods round Thebes. A peasant women confides in her; the Sphinx herself *when she is woman* falls in love with Oedipus, and as a *woman* tells him the answer to her silly riddle. Then suddenly she turns into the dire supernatural creature which is the symbol of all blind meaningless destruction in the world. The only moment when I thought Miss Ursula Jeans missed a point (her great speech as Sphinx—magnificent, gruesome, beautiful—she delivered with striking virtuosity), was the moment when her hand caressed the neck of the tired peasant boy. We ought then to have felt a thrill of danger. Was she, though she seemed a gentle lady, about to kill him?

Jocasta and Oedipus, (the incest motive), were treated psychologically. How real Jocasta was! How recognisable their relation! Her love for her young husband was maternal; he loved the mother in his wife. In M. Cocteau's play their relation had a Freudian reality. But in spite of these condiments for modern spectators, " the sentiment of Oedipus' sublime acquiescence in fate " was not lost. It was reinforced by them. To-day it is through the conception of the subconscious, a dark irrational power which steers us from birth, that we share most intimately the Greek conception of fate.

DESMOND MACCARTHY.

"THE TROJANS" AT GLASGOW

THERE are thousands of amateur dramatic and operatic societies scattered through Great Britain. No doubt the dramatic societies outnumber the operatic, for I know that the British Drama League possesses thousands of affiliated provincial societies among its members, whereas there is no similar organisation uniting the amateur operatic societies. But all these societies—with very few exceptions, and then only on rare occasions—are feeble and unimaginative bodies whose existence depends chiefly on the vanity of members who want to see themselves on the stage dressed up in the parts of London West-end successes made familiar to them by touring companies or by the members' own occasional visits to London.

During the years that I was a member of the Council of the British Drama League, nothing depressed me more than seeing the lists of the plays performed by the amateur societies affiliated to the League. All the hackneyed rubbish of the London stage was chosen with unfailing certainty for reproduction by amateur societies. Rarely did it occur to any society that the only way to make its work interesting was to perform plays that the touring companies never gave. It is exactly the same with amateur operatic societies. They know of no light

operas or comic operas but Gilbert and Sullivan's; they know of no so-called grand opera but Puccini's and Wagner's. These they reproduce *ad nauseam*; but, fortunately, as they possess no powerful central organisation like the British Drama League, the dreadful things they do, and the dreadful way they do them, remain hidden from all eyes and ears but their own.

This being the pitiful situation of nearly all operatic and dramatic societies—being as they mostly are without local tradition, without character and without any ambition other than to ape what they think is thought well of in London—it is easy to imagine the sensation it aroused among musicians and music lovers, not only in London but everywhere where there are any musicians and music-lovers, when it was announced that the Glasgow Grand Opera Society was going to perform Berlioz's great opera *Les Troyens* for a week at the Theatre Royal, the biggest theatre in Glasgow. At first nobody could believe it. We all treated it as a joke. That a provincial city (I beg Glasgow's pardon; henceforth I shall refer to it as a provincial capital!) should on its own initiative propose to do something that London had never done, was really so startling and unprecedented as to be almost unbelievable. Not *La Bohême*! not *Madam Butterfly*! not *Lohengrin*! not even such a well-known though nevertheless superior work as *Carmen*, but the completely unknown and colossal *Les Troyens*! Well, one could only imagine that there had suddenly been such an accession of brains to the west coast of Scotland that Glasgow had suddenly gone mad.

Last week, however, the Glasgow Grand Opera Society, under its able conductor, Dr. Erik Chisholm, carried out its project, and every English musician who loves music was there to hear it. It was impossible to do the whole opera in one night, because this would have meant starting at five o'clock, which is only practicable at Covent Garden or at a Festival Theatre to which people come on holiday; so the opera was given in two parts, *La Prise de Troie* and *Les Troyens à Carthage*, on successive nights—so that the complete opera was performed three times during the six nights of the week. Dr. Erik Chisholm had at his disposal an orchestra of about sixty, a large chorus and a *corps de ballet*. Naturally, one was very nervous beforehand, both about his conducting and his orchestra, for Berlioz demands an orchestra double this size, and his music is notoriously difficult to do justice to both for players and conductors. Dr. Chisholm might well have been nervous, seeing his great responsibility and the fact that he had the Cambridge Professor of Music, a number of London musicians and critics, and many music lovers from different parts in his audience on the first nights. However, he came through this ordeal with flying colours. He showed from the first that he had a real grip of the music and that he had known how to inspire his players and his singers with the right spirit. Consequently, although Dr. Chisholm would be the first to admit that often we only got the skeleton of what Berlioz intended, the opera nevertheless came across the footlights with superb effect, and this production proved what needed proving before an audience, seeing that it has never been performed in Great Britain, that *Les Troyens* in its complete form is, even in the hands of amateurs, a wonderfully moving and powerful work on the stage, quite apart from its specifically musical qualities.

The work being practically unknown—the pianoforte score being, as Mr. Newman points out, and as Liszt did before him, a deception—it is best to give the chief impressions made at a first hearing. In the first part, *La Prise de Troie*, on the Monday night it was a disadvantage not to be able to hear, except rarely, the words of Professor Edward J. Dent's English translation. There are operas where the words are unimportant, all that is necessary being to know the plot; and Wagner's operas are a good example of this case. There are operas where it is even disadvantageous to hear the words in any language that is familiar to the listener, and Verdi's *La Traviata*, which is exquisitely beautiful in Italian to English people ignorant of that language, but indescribably banal if sung as it is at Sadler's Wells in our own tongue, is an example of this second class. But there is a third class of opera best illustrated by Purcell's *Dido and Æneas*, and by Gluck's great works, where it is essential not only to know the plot, but to hear the actual words of the singers and the choruses, because these are dramatically vital, not mere verbose stuffing for dramatic situations to enable the composer to build up separate musical effects as in Wagner and many other composers. Declamation is extremely important in *La Prise de Troie*, and the part of Cassandra requires a singer who is a master of declamation, such as Chaliapin, otherwise the real effect aimed at by Berlioz is lost. Needless to say, Miss Jeanny Black, who took the part at Glasgow, did not fulfil this requirement, but she did as well as most well-known singers would have done. The beautiful scene between Cassandra and her lover Chorebus, being more lyrical, was easier to render and to appreciate, but even more effective was the exquisite pantomime of Andromache and Astyanax in the second act. The whole of this scene is quite unique in opera, and is alone sufficient to justify the inclusion of *La Prise de Troie* in the repertory of every opera house.

The next scene, in the tent of Æneas, is also a magnificent achievement. For sheer dramatic imagination there is nothing to surpass it, and I can think of nothing quite like it in any opera. The parts of Æneas (Guy F. McCrone) and the Ghost of Hector (William Dickie) were surprisingly well done, and the producer (William Henry) had contrived this scene admirably. If the last scene was less successful, it is because it is one that needs real virtuosity in scenic presentation and in performing. Here again fine choral declamation as used by Gluck and Spontini is needed, and it is almost a lost art. It is the lack of it and the misunderstanding of Berlioz's aims that made some critics lukewarm in their praise of this scene, and, indeed, of the first part of *Les Troyens* as a whole.

The second part performed on the Tuesday night, *Les Troyens à Carthage*, was universally praised, partly because it is much more lyrical than the first part, and we therefore understand better how to treat it, and partly because it contains one whole act of what must really be without any exaggeration the most beautiful music that occurs in any opera—music that can only be compared with the finest slow movements in Beethoven's pianoforte sonatas and chamber music. I refer to the act in The Garden of Dido by the Sea. Also following this is the famous *pantomime symphonique*, the Royal Hunt. The music of this scene occurs frequently on concert programmes, but one can form little idea of the effect of this scene from a mere orchestral performance of the music. It is a genuine *pantomime symphonique*, and the mimeing is dramatically essential and extraordinarily effective. This scene was perhaps the best piece of production which Mr. William Henry achieved, and the applause at the end of it was as spontaneous and enthusiastic as it deserved.

It was a pleasure to discover that Berlioz's genius did not flag after those two superb scenes, but remains on the same high level during the wonderful scene of the Trojans preparing to leave Carthage. The song of the sailor Hylas is a beautiful invention, and the farewell of Æneas, which taxed the resources of Mr. McCrone beyond their limits, is simply magnificent. Here I may mention that the comic duet between the two guards is a great success, a piece of real, grotesque, but telling invention. The neat scene of Dido left deserted is exquisite in its sensitive rightness of expression, but the actual finale I found rather disappointing. No doubt the choral singing might have been much more effective, but I cannot help feeling that Berlioz made a mistake in introducing the revenge theme of the future rivalry between Carthage and Rome. But perhaps one should not say more than that on this occasion the finale did not convince. This is a great pity if it is due to an intrinsic defect as one leaves the theatre having been let down after being taken up to sublime heights. However, it now remains for Covent Garden to emulate Glasgow and let us see what really adequate resources can do for this indisputably great work.

W. J. TURNER

PLAYS AND PICTURES

"Cornelius" at the Duchess

The London theatrical world is incomparably narrow in its interests, and successful dramatists usually sink themselves in it, thus losing all contact with actuality. Mr. Priestley, however, keeps his ear to the ground, and has had the courage and integrity to write a play on a subject which is financially unpromising. *Cornelius* is *The Cherry Orchard* of the English business-man. We are shown the collapse of a firm of aluminium importers; and in the last act, when we have the final hours in the office, ledgers being destroyed, and clerks saying good-bye, we listen for the equivalent of the axe's noise, chopping down the flowering trees. Mr. Priestley has enormous skill in writing the realistic character parts which are the *forte* of English acting, and the fisrt two acts of *Cornelius* are admirable. The acting of Mr. James Harcourt and Miss Ann Wilton in this play is a joy to watch. But we leave the theatre dissatisfied, because the business-man himself, Cornelius, does not finally convince. Mr. Ralph Richardson is an extremely accomplished actor, but he puts too much charm into the part—not that business-men cannot be charming, but because we cannot take his troubles to heart; we feel in our bones that he could make a success in any profession. We never believe in his suicidal intentions. Moreover, Mr. Priestley tells us next to nothing about him. He must have a life outside the office, friends and recreations (he certainly would be the most popular member of any golf club), but here he is shown only as The Business Man. His partner is richly played by Mr. Harcourt Williams, and Miss Victoria Hopper will be appreciated by those who like the simpering-solemn girl-child or Tessa type. *Cornelius* is not a success as a play, but it is a very plucky failure, far better worth seeing than most available entertainment.

"British Agent" at the Regal

The puzzle as to what film to make of Bruce Lockhart's excellent book can only have been momentary: it quite naturally becomes "spy-story." Unluckily the metamorphosis is incomplete, and the result is neither good Lockhart nor good le Queux. We were warned at the outset to regard the picture purely as entertainment, untrammelled by political *parti pris* or historical accuracy. The director clearly knew what he was up to: the emotional—or political?—bias shifted with fine dramatic opportunism, and an illusion of impartiality was created by coaxing the spectator's sympathy first one way, then the other. Thus with the People's triumph every member of the audience—either a little Leninist or else a little Conservative—must have known what to expect of the brutal Cossackry, and half-expected the British Ambassador, at the inevitable ball, to offer the People cake. Later—the dramatic backing veered to the losing side and a touch of Capitalism was felt to make the whole world kin—except that of course ideals kept the film lovers apart, when the Old Country and Not Letting the Other Fellow Down sternly contended against the Red Millennium tripping our fellows up. Leslie Howard's performance was so admirable that he made his side of the picture comprehensible, almost impressive; he invested even the pawky humour of the patriot with dignity and, dam'me, with a certain grace. Actually the script was the film's strong point; particularly commendable was a neat antithesis between the different mannerisms of British and American gallantry in the face of danger. Essentially a believer in what may prove good enough for our grandsons not being good enough for us, Kay Francis was bewildered as Elena, the idealist true to her Cause and false to sex and common sense. She is at home in the expensive gowns of an untumultuous world; like a peacock strutting about a factory, she was lost among large issues. Hers is the personal note, not a pure faith in abstractions.

"Clive of India" at the Tivoli

Most of us probably agree in what we like about Clive ("that he's no longer alive") and concur with Clive himself in feeling that "there is a great deal to be said—for being dead." This dull production has the history-books' fondness for empire-builders, and Hollywood's current craze for this sceptred isle; so it might have made good entertainment. But, true to machine-made standards, it has turned out a very silly film. No one can have expected the screen to cast any great light on Clive: to call the complexity of his character a magnificent subject for drama is presumably to give the theatre its due, since the cinema abandons all such problems to the stage—but then your modern historical playwright so often converts that into a mere lecture-room, and offers a paper on So-and-so in place of a play. The profile of Clive's actions, some true indication of his character, were all one asked. Ronald Colman's profile, without the moustache, and his usual harassed, unavailing attempts to act were what we got.

THE COMING WEEK

FRIDAY, March 29th—
- Dinner organised by the University Labour Federation. Guests: Mr. and Mrs. James Maxton. National Trade Union Club, 24 New Oxford Street, 6.30 for 7.
- B.B.C. Chamber Concert, Broadcasting House, 8.15.

SATURDAY, March 30th—
- The "St. John Passion," Albert Hall, 2.30.
- London Consort of Singers and Viol Players, Victoria and Albert Museum, 3.

SUNDAY, March 31st—
- John A. Hobson on "The Sense of Fair Play," Conway Hall, 11.
- "Battleship Potemkin," Willoughby Hall, 1 Willoughby Road, 6 and 8.
- Brosa String Quartet, Working Men's College, Crowndale Road, 6.30.
- Elsie Fogerty. Recital of Religious Verse. Wigmore Hall, 8.15.

MONDAY, April 1st—
- Courtauld-Sargent Concert, Queen's Hall, 8.15. And on April 2nd.

TUESDAY, April 2nd—
- Indian Matinée, Playhouse Theatre, 2.30.

WEDNESDAY, April 3rd—
- Conference on Aviation as an International Problem, Caxton Hall, Westminster, 2.30 & 5. Also on April 4th.
- B.B.C. Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Adrian Boult, Caird Hall, Dundee, 7.45.
- G. D. H. Cole on "An Economic Plan for Socialism," The Institute, Central Square, Hampstead Garden Suburb, 8.15.
- "The Old Ladies," New Theatre.

THURSDAY, April 4th—
- The Pudovkin Film, "Storm Over Asia," Denison House, 296 Vauxhall Bridge Road. Also on April 5th and 6th.
- "Noah" (Translation of "Noé" by André Obey), St. Pancras People's Theatre, Charrington Street, Crowndale Road, 8. And on April 5th and 6th.
- London Philharmonic Society, conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham, Queen's Hall, 8.30.

OLD, OLD STORY

How many people in the prime of life feel convinced that they have reached a ripe old age. "I'm too old for that," they murmur tragically as one youthful pleasure after another is abandoned. But as likely as not the illusion is due, not to Anno Domini, but to accumulated waste matter; not to hardened arteries, but to clogged systems. Let them but try this simple remedy—a dash of Eno's "Fruit Salt" in a tumbler of water. Let them see the happy carefree way it leaps and bubbles in the glass. Let them feel its youthful exuberance revive their flagging spirits and jaded bodies. Then, indeed, will they realise that "a man is as old as he feels."

Current Literature

BOOKS IN GENERAL

ARNOLD BENNETT was fond of asserting that he never spent more than an hour over his weekly article on books which appeared on Wednesdays in the *Evening Standard*. It was an astonishing performance, often refreshing, sometimes merely bluff and arrogant. It beat all records and dazzled by superlatives—the quickest written, the most highly paid and most widely read article of its kind in journalism. Many readers were attracted by its sheer assertiveness; the price, too, of each word was known to be a couple of shillings, and the spectacle, week after week, of sentences, paragraphs and whole articles built up in a bland edifice of florins was breath-taking and almost magical. No wonder that half-a-column would make a book "go," that authors pocketed appreciation from Bennett as though he had bestowed a gigantic tip! He developed, along with an odd infallibility, certain tricks of style which were even more remarkable. One of his favourite methods of beginning an article, when he was in a hurry, was so bare-faced that the reader was immediately knocked flat with astonishment. He would start off with a generalisation or two—it hardly mattered what—and then proceed to the subject of his article. How was it done? Thus:

> Not everyone can write a novel. Many first novels by young women are amazingly good. The book I am writing about this week is a second novel by a young man . . .

In this gusto for the *non sequitur*, for collecting together any number of statements or facts which belonged, as it were, to the same magnetic field, Bennett was unrivalled. I am reminded of his method by Mr. Frank Swinnerton's *The Georgian Literary Scene* (Heinemann, 12*s.* 6*d.*), which seems to me, for all its apparent solidity and care, to have been compiled on much the same principle.

* * *

This book of 550 pages sets out to give a picture of English literature during the last quarter of a century. "It is not," we are told, "a perfunctory criticism of individuals; and it is not an ordinary history. Mr. Swinnerton has known personally many of the important writers of the last twenty-five years, and besides estimating their work he has given here character studies of men and women with whose work he deals." So Aldous Huxley is "the tallest English author known to me." And to balance him, there is Sir James Barrie:

> . . . one of the smallest writers alive. He gives the impression of being very broad in the shoulders; he cares nothing at all for dress; and his little figure in general passes unnoticed as he walks along the street. Quite different from Shaw, who, being tall and thin, strides along in woollen gloves and without an overcoat. . . .

Shaw is described on another page:

> In 1884, Shaw weighed 142 pounds. His height, without shoes, was six feet one inch . . .

(That is perfect Bennett.)

> . . . He was lean, pale-faced, bearded, rather ginger, with blue-grey eyes and small hands.

Sometimes we are told not only what an author does look like, but what he doesn't:

> Many readers of Maugham's most famous novel, *Of Human Bondage*, must have assumed—for it is usual to make all sorts of assumptions regarding authors, on the strength of what seems to be an autobiographical book—that Maugham, like Philip, suffers from a club foot. He does not.

Which public, one begins to ask, is Mr. Swinnerton writing for? Whatever his object, he strikes the note of "People I have Met" with disconcerting ease:

> To me, Rose Macaulay has always seemed one of the kindest and least affected of English literary women. She does, it is true, bring her mind to bear upon the conversation, and she is a little brisk (as well as indistinct of speech, in the manner of some Cantabs of her generation); but that is all. She is as far as possible from the greatest sin of English women writers—the desire to impress. She is tall, slender to thinness, has very pale blue eyes and a delicate fair complexion, and is a lady.

Let me add some examples from the critical side:

> There was the influence of Samuel Butler, the publication of whose *Notebooks* in 1912 intensified growing interest in his one novel *The Way of All Flesh*. . . . As I have never read *The Way of All Flesh* I cannot testify personally to its effect upon the mind. . . .

The personal touch is never far off:

> After *Limbo* was published Huxley used to speak of a "Peacockian novel" which he was writing, and I mention this fact, otherwise nowhere noted, because it is so interesting to realise that his impulse towards fiction came from a scholar-satirist, Thomas Love Peacock, and not a novelist.

Peacock's influence on Huxley has, of course, been pointed out by hundreds of critics before: the only fact "otherwise nowhere noted" is that Huxley himself used to speak of Peacock—hardly surprising! Most of Mr. Swinnerton's revelations are due to a passion for triviality; he is suspicious of "talk about art" or aesthetic theory; and when he ventures on an apothegm, we may be expected to sit up:

> Imagination is a faculty to which the cultivation of the intellect is . . . inimical.

This pronouncement appears on p. 500 under the heading "Conclusion"; and with the feeling "That's *that!*" we turn over the page and begin a new section:

> To me [says Mr. Swinnerton] as to Sainte-Beuve as reported by Stevenson, all experience is a single great book; and every form of knowledge, the domestic as well as the biological and astronomical and psycho-analytical, is capable of enriching the mind and imagination and increasing the interest of life.

So the conclusion on p. 500 was not so conclusive after all.

* * *

These details—the irrelevance and lack of discrimination revealed by them—are characteristic of the book's structure; Mr. Swinnerton, after the Bennett tradition, is a critical opportunist. How on earth am I to connect So-and-So with So-and-So? one imagines him muttering as he goes along—"Besides being the first Scotsman, Barrie is the first sentimentalist to figure in our panorama of the Georgian literary world." A whole hierarchy of distinctions is raised in this way. An Irishman follows a Scotsman: the fact is eagerly noted. And novelists (the book is very largely about novelists, by the way) are shoved into awkward squads, for which even Mr. Swinnerton has to apologise; David Garnett, P. G. Wodehouse, J. B. Priestley and A. P. Herbert, for example, being huddled together into one chapter. There is no mention of any poet since Eliot, and very little about critics and literary biographers or historians. Galsworthy and Arnold Bennett are quoted for the beauty of their prose, but George Moore is not. We are given nine pages on Mr. Allan Monkhouse as a dramatist and none on Sean O'Casey. Desmond MacCarthy is dismissed in a paragraph, apparently because "he is a critic with whom I seldom agree." H. M. Tomlinson, but not Lawrence of Arabia; J. D. Beresford, but not Stella Benson; Charlotte Mew, but not Day Lewis; Mary Webb, but not Ronald Firbank—the direction of Mr. Swinnerton's choice becomes pretty obvious. The book, in fact, moves steadily through its twenty-five years from the first- to the second-rate. No doubt, it is effective by Book Society standards, and it does in fact contain some sound, patient criticism. The essays at the beginning on Henry James, Shaw, Wells, Galsworthy and Bennett show that Mr. Swinnerton might have written a useful, and even admirable, book on the pre-war situation of novelists. As it is, *The Georgian Literary Scene*, described on the title-page as a "panorama," appears to me a duller and more trivial *Derby Day*. The oddly assorted figures are cramped into a small paddock. We get the impression that Mr. Swinnerton, intent on so many likenesses, has gone on patiently adding details, making one nose slightly larger than another, lifting an eyebrow here, depressing the lines of a mouth there, until at last the whole canvas has been filled in. The features of the great, the semi-great, and the inconspicuous stare out at us woodenly from their scene, with an alarming similarity. They are all Celebrities.

G. W. STONIER

IF I WERE DICTATOR

If I Were Dictator. By JAMES MAXTON. *Methuen.* 2s. 6d.

If I Were Dictator. By H. R. L. SHEPPARD. *Methuen.* 2s. 6d.

If any civilised, intelligent man is asked the question: "What would you do if you were dictator?" there is only one possible answer for him to give: "I should resign." When, however, the civilised, intelligent man has signed an agreement with a publisher to write a book of not less than 20,000 words with the title *If I Were Dictator*, he is, as these two books show, in a quandary. For a book of 20,000 words to be short by 19,997 words is an awkward predicament both for author and publisher. Mr. James Maxton and the Rev. H. R. L. Sheppard have extricated themselves from it as creditably as possible. They are both well aware that there is nothing of any real political or social value that a dictator can effect in the modern world. Dictatorships belong to the era of primitive and barbarous societies; they are adapted only to the control of savages who believe in ju-jus, totems, and witch-doctors. We can only return to dictatorships if we return at the same time to the psychology of the cannibal and the head-hunter. If we want to force castor oil down the throats of people whose social ideals are different from our own, or turn the whole population into an army of obedient, goose-stepping braves, or make war, or persecute Socialists, Capitalists, or Jews (according to taste), a dictator may help us to do this and so gratify the primitive instinct to make other people (and ourselves) unhappy. He may even for a time succeed in such magnificent achievements as making Russian tractors work and Italian trains depart and arrive at the right time. He may in fact turn a modern, civilised country into hell and call it Communism or Fascism (according to taste), but that is as far as he can go.

Mr. Maxton, who knows all this, has got out of his difficulty and written an interesting, eloquent, and sometimes witty book. The only thing described in it which any dictator could really do is probably the internment of the Hitlers, Mussolinis and Pilsudskis on the island of St. Kilda. (Even that job is undone on the last page by the release of "the poor devils.") Otherwise the book is a rough outline picture of the organisation of the world if its populations determined to regulate their countries according to elementary notions of common sense and decency instead of savagery and mumbo-jumbo. In other words, it sketches the outline of a disarmed and socialistically organised world. The thing could be done to-morrow, but not by a dictator. Mr. Maxton salves his conscience by resigning on the last page instead of on the first.

Poor Canon Sheppard is in a far worse hole than Mr. Maxton. He is in the Church of England. And he is a civilised, honest, and intelligent clergyman. No one could be in a more awkward position. And on the top of it he has undertaken to write 20,000 words with the title *If I Were Dictator*, and on the tip of that top has decided to write his book on the Church of England, and to explain what he would say to it and do to it, if he were dictator. No wonder he tells us in his second sentence that "it worries the life out of" him. Like Mr. Maxton, Canon Sheppard sees quite clearly that a dictator could do no more good to the Church than to society. There is no attempt to dictate on the part of Canon Sheppard. There is a good deal of lamentation and a certain amount of straight talk. He says in effect that to-day the Church is a nervous and nerveless sham. Instead of "declaring the mind of Christ on those evils that are disgracing and threatening to destroy our civilisation," it spends its time considering such questions as whether it shall authorise the publication of the Banns of Matrimony by lay readers. It lives a life of quiet gentility, supporting the Empire and the League, the last war and the next when it comes, and that most divine of all human rights, the right of property. A Church which professes to teach the word of Christ in the modern world and whose ideal is to live a life of quiet gentility can justly be condemned as a sham. Canon Sheppard wants the Church to give up the gentility and to preach Christianity. He is aware that the result would probably be the disruption of the Church. But he prefers disruption to corruption. He is, too, aware that while a saint or one of the despised and rejected might create or recreate a Church, a dictator is as sterile in the spiritual world as he is in the political. The attempt to make men Christians by burning and racking them was tried for many years and had to be abandoned as unsuccessful; it is improbable that Mussolini's castor oil or Hitler's rubber truncheons would succeed where the stake failed. Canon Sheppard abandons his dictatorship before he assumes it. He would simply make four "proposals." The second is the only one which we need consider here. He would declare in the name of the Church that "the disciples of Jesus Christ may on no account take any lot or part in killing their brethren, white, brown or black." By doing this, he says, he would "rock the foundations of the establishment." Canon Sheppard is optimistic. The probability is that nothing would happen at all. His whole book argues that what is wrong with the Church of Christ is that it no longer believes in the words of Christ. But it goes on, week in, week out, repeating them. Listen to a wireless service; you have never heard a human being speak words which he believed or expected you to believe in the tone and drone in which the clergyman addresses you. If Canon Sheppard were dictator, his obedient clergymen would repeat his words about killing in their wireless services in the same tone in which they now repeat the words of Christ. And they would—in a quite different tone of voice—support the army, the navy, the air force, and the next war. The argument has come full circle; it is no good looking to dictatorships for civilisation or Christianity; the only way to get civilisation is for people to be civilised, and the only way to get Christianity is by believing in it.

LEONARD WOOLF

AMERICAN THEODOLITE

A Dictionary of American Slang. Compiled by M. H. H. WESEEN. *Harrap.* 8s. 6d.

Farewell to Fifth Avenue. By CORNELIUS VANDERBILT, JR. 10s. 6d.

The Ten Million. By MARK HELLINGER. *John Lane.* 8s. 6d.

Portrait of America. By DIEGO RIVERA. *Allen and Unwin.* 12s. 6d.

Here are four angles on the United States—an angle, need I explain, being a point of view. Take the dictionary first, for it may be useful when you read the others. In their French-English dictionary Messrs. Harrap produced a fascinating, authoritative and indispensable work; this American slang dictionary fills a long-felt whatnot, but does not inspire entire confidence. Professor Weseen sometimes uses a very odd lingo in his definitions, using "overly" meaning "too much" and talking of "burglarising in the daytime." When there is a perfectly good word "burgle," why perpetrate "burglarise"—and anyhow can you, in America, burgle in the daytime? In England it just can't be done. But perhaps these are good American uses which I ignore. Again it is always dangerous to pretend to a knowledge of foreign slang, but I am surprised by Professor Weseen's definition of a "ham" actor as an amateur actor: I supposed that it meant, on the contrary, an old-fashioned, barnstorming over-actor. He also includes a number of words which appear to be not so much slang as the ἅπαξ λεγόμενα of wisecracking journalists—I cannot believe that the word Bolithusiast, for instance, meaning an enthusiastic admirer of William Bolitho, is in general circulation. Again, he gives the good English "screwed" in his list of over two hundred words meaning intoxicated, but he omits the more usual American meaning of the word "to screw"—I cannot define it further than by recommending English girls when visiting New York not to remark "Last night I was thoroughly screwed." This dictionary, however, is to be recommended to all film-fans, to all lovers of Dashiel Hammett and the tough school of novelists, and to everyone interested in language. American slang is keeping English a living language, and even the yokels in our remoter counties can be heard employing the fruity idioms of Chicago. Indeed, this slang is rich in concrete imagery very like that used by Shakespeare's rustics. Two tendencies in it are, I think, unlucky, the use of portmanteau words, like "happencident" and "guesstimate," and the use of mongrel words like "sleeporium" and "buyology." But the real slang, the slang which becomes current, is most of it admirable, and deserves the papers of naturalisation which it often receives. I wish that Professor Weseen had included some explanations of origin. The useful word "kibitzer," for instance, meaning a person who volunteers advice which is not welcome, is presumably Yiddish. Most of the best idioms, however, need no explanation. "To arrive in an armchair," is to arrive late and unconcerned about one's lateness. A "balloon tyre" is a sag under the eyes. "Putting on the Ritz" and a "blah blurb" explain themselves. I like "a five H man" for a very conceited person (Hell, how he hates himself!), and "Poets' Corner" for the W.C. The oddest

words are " the indefinite substitute names for any device or appliance," something, I presume, between a gadget and a thingumebob : here are a few of them, dingus, dingbat, dofunny, doozandazzy, fumadiddle, gazunkus, kadigin and kathot. (But which, I wonder, are current ?) Apart from " drunk," " girl " is the word for which there are most slang expressions—over thirty are listed under the head of College Slang alone. (The nature of these expressions might discourage those who wish to increase the number of " coednas " at Oxford and Cambridge.) From the angle of the slang-dictionary, drink women and crime are the most salient American activities, but as Professor Weseen points out, slang is apt to represent " defiance of established forms and constituted authorities." In fact, a slang expression is apt to have the same history as a great American family like the Morgans. It begins as a crook, it arrives as a parvenu, and it survives (if it does survive) as a respected habitué of the highest circles.

Farewell to Fifth Avenue is America from the angle of an aristocrat who is " a traitor to his class." The author's grandmother had an authoritative position in New York which no duchess could claim in London. Mr. Vanderbilt himself refused to stick to polo and yachting, became a journalist, got himself disinherited, and now blows the gaff on American High Life. It is a peculiarly unpleasant picture which he paints of a circle which has all the faults of an aristocracy and very few of its virtues, a circle whose superiority lies chiefly in the fact that its great fortunes were made a generation earlier than those of other people. The book is packed with amusing and significant stories, and makes excellent reading. How pathetic this *cri de coeur* from the son of a partner in Morgan's :

> Don't you envy your father, Neil ? I do envy mine. . . . They didn't have to worry about the New Deal and all that it implies. . . . In the days of their youth nothing was respected more than the ability to make money ; while now——

Mr. Vanderbilt is an enthusiastic supporter of the present President, and explains one reason for his success : under his influence American politics have become an occupation which attracts honest and intelligent men. He does not mention an even graver need of America, a respected and respectable Civil Service. I remember a prominent American lady explaining complacently to me that no able and well-educated American (like her own son) would dream of becoming anything so unambitious as a public servant. She could not see that she was boasting of an attitude directly responsible for most of the disorder, corruption and crime in her country.

The Ten Million gives us America from the Broadway angle. Mr. Hellinger is a journalist who was given a " column " and who made enormously good.

> I was a hero in the land where lovers meet, husbands cheat, and wives bleat. I was somebody in the domain of tips, sips, gyps, pips, lips, and hips. I met hot mammas, cold mammas, sweet mammas, pretty mammas ; everything but real mammas. I mingled with the Follies, the dollies, the ragmen, and the gagmen. I was surrounded by dimmed lights, shining lights, and Israelites. I saw prize fleas, knock-knees, book-shops, hook-shops, elbow-benders and gossip vendors. I was feted, hated, baited, and mated. For I was Important now. I was a Broadway columnist.

His stories are top-knotch journalism, they have the punch of Max Baer, the speed of light, and at the end there is always a twist as rewarding and unexpected as quintuplets. He even pulls a new and stunning variant of Maupassant's necklace story. He has the usual clandestine sentimentality of the professionally hard-boiled, but I strongly recommend his book to be taken (like all reprinted journalism) in small doses. New York, I seem to have heard, is not America, but this book is New York.

Finally, America from the angle of a Mexican Communist. For what reason I do not know, Mr. Diego Rivera was invited to paint a fresco in the great Rockefeller Centre, and there in the Holy of Holies of capitalism he set up the image of Lenin. Came the rumpus : the picture was removed : and with the cash Mr. Rivera painted a series of panels for the New Workers School, illustrating the history of the United States from the Communist point of view. In this book these are reproduced with a commentary. As a view of history they are interesting—Tom Paine and Sam Adams, for instance, are in the foreground of the panel of the American Revolution, while Washington appears in the background watching his slaves at work. In a later panel Pierpont Morgan's nose looms almost as large as Lincoln's whole face. As history the panels have the disadvantage of needing a written commentary to explain them. As art, that is to say, as paintings which excite mysterious and profound emotion, and which gain with familiarity in significance, they seem to me to have remarkably little merit. It would be pleasant to greet in Mr. Rivera a painter inspired by revolutionary faith to make masterpieces, as Fra Angelico was inspired by his religious faith. But once more the dismal fact emerges that the world is not what we would like it to be ; that what would be pleasant is not, alas, necessarily true.

RAYMOND MORTIMER

A PROPHET OF PEACE

An Impossible Parson. By BASIL MARTIN. *Allen and Unwin.* 5*s.*

It is not mere pedantry to object to Mr. Martin's misuse of the word " parson " in the title of his moving, sincere and eloquent autobiography. His religion would have no use for the parson, who is, by definition, representative of his parish, a typical man, a little ordinary, sharing his people's prejudices and as at home, at his best, in the inn-parlour as in the church. Mr. Martin, in stating his inability to " fulfil the popular conception of a minister of religion " says he has persevered in his work " because I have never lost my enthusiasm for preaching or my belief in its importance " : wherein he proclaims how little of a parson he has been, for the parson often thinks little of preaching or is bad at it, and yet may be excellent at his own particular business.

Mr. Martin has been throughout his life something rarer than a parson : he has been a prophet, an enthusiast and, I suspect, a man inclined to echo the fine brag of Ibsen's Dr. Stockmann that " the minority is always right," one of those gallant truths which are unconquerable until, as Ibsen pointed out so disconcertingly in *The Wild Duck*, it hardens into a formula. Mr. Martin was the son of a Congregational minister, descended from a Huguenot family. His father was in charge of one of the best known chapels in Oxford ; and Mr. Martin's opinions of Anglicanism are inevitably coloured by his early recollections of the bigoted attitude to Dissent, then common in Oxford, an attitude which he found only slightly changed when he himself was minister of a church at Hereford. After a period in business, he was trained at New College, London, after he had taken his degree at Oxford, where the tests had just been removed. He worked in the slums of Soho, then for four years in Kentish Town, then after spending a year at Mansfield College under Dr. Fairbairn, he was asked by Dr. Horton to look after the mission supported by the Lyndhurst Road church. From 1893 to 1913 he was at Hereford ; he then abandoned the Congregationalists for Unitarianism, and has since then been minister of a chapel at Finchley.

This bare sketch of Mr. Martin's career is necessary, because the most remarkable characteristic of his book is its unity of spirit ; the author's opinions may have changed, but the man himself has remained consistently loyal to principles which we do not always associate with the pulpit. Like all prophets, from Elijah onward, Mr. Martin is a little too inclined to believe that he is " left alone," to forget that in many places, and from pulpits of other communions, opinions as radical as his—on social justice, on war, on national hypocrisy—have never ceased to be heard.

His book, simply and modestly written, should be read by all who have enjoyed the spirit of those rare little books of Mark Rutherford's which picture an English life almost exactly the same as that shown in Mr. Martin's. Its chief note is one of intellectual integrity and a certain dignity of living which was the strength of English dissent—especially Independency, the Friends and the Unitarians. The religion of these people was a strong ethical Theism ; and the men of Mr. Martin's generation were not greatly perplexed about the problem, so insistent now, whether there was any sure sanction for their faith outside traditional Christianity. In social work many of the London Congregationalists and Baptists rivalled the great Anglo-Catholic missioners : Charrington, Cuff, the Nichol Street mission, Mansfield Settlement, were strongholds in poor districts, though as a rule there was less of revolutionary politics among their workers than among the Anglicans.

Mr. Martin is an exception. He was always not merely a Liberal, but a sound Radical. His chapter on Hereford and its life is a model of critical writing. He never had any sympathy with the absurd demand that ministers of religion should keep out of public affairs, a demand which makes nonsense of the whole history of the Christian religion. Very early, in the days of the Boer War, he fastened on that problem as the one which the churches must be prepared to meet. He was persecuted as a pro-Boer, he was isolated in his new fellowship during the Great War ; and records that he was the only Unitarian who was a

member of that famous little society, The Fellowship of Reconciliation. He has, on this question, that disarming and startling common sense which has surely, under the influence of men like Mr. Martin, grown in strength among ordinary people in every country, though our politicians seem still to be safely insulated from it. He takes Acton's view that Lincoln was wrong to go to war; and suggests that "the history of our own country might have been better if the Puritans had put their trust in argument instead of taking up arms against the King, if George Fox had been their leader instead of Oliver Cromwell." As do so many like-minded men, Mr. Martin underestimates the strength of stupidity, insensitiveness, of actual wickedness in the world; but reading his book, it is hard to believe that such generosity of temper as he exhibits, such deep desire for justice and kindness, would not call forth a corresponding generosity from his opponents.

An Impossible Parson is the work of a man of fine spirit and firm purpose, who gives us not only the story of his own life, but an account, vivid and faithful, of a society which has almost ceased to exist. It had grave faults: but it is hard to see that anything as good is ready to take its place. R. ELLIS ROBERTS

ASIA AND AFRICA

Africa Dances. By GEOFFREY GORER. *Faber and Faber.* 15s.
Between the Oxus and the Indus. By COLONEL R. C. F. SCHOMBERG. *Hopkinson.* 15s.

Will Africa become the new goal of cultured globe-trotters? Only a few years past, the curiosity of our more mobile intellectuals rarely extended beyond Athens; but now Peking itself seems in a fair way to becoming a suburb of Oxford, and it is high time for the literary traveller to look elsewhere. Mr. Gorer sets us an example. It was in the autumn of 1933 that he was introduced by the Russian painter, Pavel Tchelitchew, to the negro dancer, Féral Benga, whose performances at the Folies Bergère and, more recently, at the Théâtre des Champs Elysées, had made some stir; and from this meeting developed the project of a joint voyage to French West Africa, there to study the native dances and, if possible, organise a black ballet. *Africa Dances* is an account of their adventures. M. Benga, alas, did not succeed in assembling the troupe of black dancers whom he had hoped to bring back with him to Paris; but Mr. Gorer made the most of the experience. His book, though in parts fragmentary and disappointing, contains a mass of extremely interesting material.

In spite of the statement printed on the dust-cover that he is "one of those astonishing young men who, like Peter Fleming . . . face appalling discomfort and baffling situations with perfect composure," the author of *Africa Dances* is neither a very good journalist, nor is he the type of traveller who courts discomfort and peril for their own sake. He went to Africa with a practical end in view; and the merits of his book should be adjudged, perhaps, not so much by the literary or journalistic quality of the writing, as by the value of the material he managed to collect. Here he was at a considerable disadvantage. The effect of dancing is notoriously hard to record; but separate postures and details of costume can always be photographed; and Mr. Gorer remarks plaintively that his camera "became the curse of my life from the moment I acquired it. It was abominably heavy and awkward to cart around." Certainly, the results he publishes are not impressive; and their inadequacy hampers his efforts at exact description.

Thus, we put down *Africa Dances* with no very clear impression of an art that one might have imagined would provide the main subject of the book; and far more interesting than Mr. Gorer's somewhat scrappy account of the dances themselves are the observations that he gathered on the way. Such, for instance, is his portrait of the Mobo Naba, the most powerful West African monarch. "His whole life is spent in pantomime; every morning he prepares to ride forth to war against his hereditary enemy; and every morning he is persuaded not to, with exactly the same words and gestures. Every quarter of an hour throughout the day he has to drink a pot of beer. . . ." At his feet crouch an assemblage of *sororés*, or boy servants, who enter his service at the age of eight and remain with him till they are given in marriage, during which time they are obliged to preserve their virginity under pain of death. Exaggeratedly graceful, clothed and coiffed like women, "whenever their master happens to belch or sneeze, or hiccough or cough or spit, or in any other way ease his overstuffed body, they click their fingers together for about a minute, making a considerable noise."

Mr. Gorer is a severe critic of French Colonial administration, which he compares unfavourably with British administration on the Gold Coast; but he is a sympathetic student of negro life, and his best chapter is devoted to "The Fetishist Religion" which he was privileged to examine at close quarters. He and his friend were made honorary members of the Agassou, or panther, fetish. He took a vow that he would neither write nor speak of anything he might see or experience; but with regard to three incidents he has decided to break his word. The first concerns an interesting piece of clairvoyance; while the second and third are more dramatic and unexpected. After a night spent at the headquarters of the fetish, he went out with the priest and other fetishers into open country:

> After about half an hour a full-grown panther walked out of the maize and started moving among the people; it was quickly followed by another, and in a short time there were fifteen panthers among us. They arrived from every direction. We had been told most earnestly on no account to touch them, and not to be afraid of them, for they would only harm wicked men (i.e., sorcerers). I was scared so that I felt my legs shaking, but I was able to keep quiet. When the fetisher stopped singing they went away again. . . . This was the only time in Africa that I saw any of the fiercer animals alive and in freedom. There were a number of villages within an hour's walk. It was about fifteen miles from Abomey.

Later, he visited the convent of the worshippers of Héviosso, the thunder fetish:

> After the usual sacrifice three men went into a trance inside the hut. . . . Suddenly against the blue sky there was a flash of lightning followed shortly by a loud peal of thunder. The flashes and thunder got more frequent and louder, till they seemed simultaneous, and the thunder gave that peculiarly unpleasant crack which it does in the tropics when the storm is nearly directly overhead. Gradually the thunder and the lightning got fainter and finally died in a rumble. It had been exactly like a quick tropical thunderstorm, except that there had been no rain and no clouds; the sun was shining all the time.

It should be added that nowhere else does Mr. Gorer (unlike Mr. Seabrook) pretend to have witnessed signs and wonders, and that these phenomena (which may, of course, be written down as the effect of some particularly powerful form of mass-hallucination)

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are described without comment or embroidery. In fact, though the professional anthropologist may disagree with many of his conclusions and the ordinary reader may be exasperated by a faculty of slick generalisation which induces him to write of the "essentially selfish" ethics of Christianity, or to announce that the negroes are a "vanishing race," *Africa Dances* is a remarkably interesting book. As different as Asia from Africa is Colonel Schomberg's account of the little-known Gilgit Agency, which lies *Between the Oxus and the Indus*, in the remote North-West corner of India. Colonel Schomberg has visited Gilgit on several occasions. He is well acquainted with its semi-independent princes, the Mir of Nagir and the Mir of Hunza, both of whom boast direct descent from Alexander the Great, and prints a photograph of the former that bears out his claims. His narrative is vivid but unpretentious; his illustrations—an important point—are clear and good. P. Q.

DEMOCRACY

The Challenge to Democracy. By C. DELISLE BURNS. *Allen and Unwin.* 5s.

This is in every respect but one an admirable book. It is acute in analysis, penetrating in diagnosis, constructive and often originally constructive in remedial suggestion. It is well, at times it is brilliantly, written, and it is inspired throughout with a passionate concern for the welfare of mankind which lifts it out of the realm of academic exercises in political theory and makes it, as a similar quality makes a Shaw Preface, an instrument of political reform. It is impossible to read a book at once so justly indignant and so passionately reasonable, without feeling impelled to take a hand in reforming what moves the author's so righteous indignation by the methods which are commended by his so excellent reasoning. In what respect, then, does the book fail to be wholly admirable? Proclaiming that modern civilisation must be saved, if it is not to relapse into barbarism, it nevertheless fails to tell us what we shall do to be saved. Hence its good qualities merely exhibit at a higher degree of excellence those which could and can be found in any contemporary book by any one of a dozen liberal and humane thinkers on the subjects of modern politics; while its failure is in the last resort the failure of all those of us who, realising the dangers that beset modern society, can satisfactorily demonstrate how they could be avoided, if men would only be sensible, but fail entirely to show how they can be avoided, men being what they are.

Let us follow the course of Professor Delisle Burns's argument. He begins by stating a problem. Since the war people's attitude to politics has admittedly changed. They are no longer disposed to reason, to argue, to make concessions; they are uncompromising, intolerant, extreme. "Since the Great War, an increasing number have believed that no one is sincere in his purposes, unless he is prepared to kill and maim his opponents in order to attain them." Why the change? Why have politics become at once so much more serious and so much more ferocious? "Why," in fact, "do conflicting interests to-day seem to be more important than any such sense of a common good as made it possible for our grandfathers to rely upon ballots rather than bullets?" Ultimately, Professor Burns answers, because there is no longer any general adhesion to an agreed moral standard. In the nineteenth century, men believed, albeit unconsciously, in a common good, based "on a common life inherited from the past." Under the influence of this belief they accepted their society. They might quarrel about how the spoils were to be divided, how power was to be shared; but as to the permanent continuance of the spoils, as to the legitimacy of the power, they were not divided. The fundamental difference between that age and our own is "the difference between *sharing* what already exists and *creating* what does not exist." We now no longer take for granted as things given and destined eternally to continue the benefits and powers of capitalist society; we propose, many of us, to create a society which offers new benefits and to seize new powers for its creation. In the way of this seizure nothing is to be allowed to stand:—"It cannot any longer be taken for granted 'that there are things no fellow can do.'" On the contrary, whether as Communists or as Fascists, "fellows" do things which would make the hair of an old-fashioned politician stand on end without themselves turning a hair, and they can do them primarily because, having lost their moral bearings in a society whose traditional assumptions they no longer accept, they must cast around like a dog which has lost its master for some new object of loyalty and allegiance, some new bond of association with their fellow men. "In the body and spirit of the more active persons in any community, the search is for a new life in closer intimacy with others"; hence Communism, hence Fascism, and hence dictatorship.

Hating dictatorship, Professor Burns considers whether democracy can meet the challenge which is implied by these new needs. Can it, in face of the jettisoning of the old moral standards and the old political concepts, provide a new sense of "common good"? To answer this question he proceeds to a survey of the main features of modern society—the city, the Nation-State, the way in which it makes and uses its wealth, the way in which it trains and educates its citizens. Democracy, he concludes, is only a part, but it is an integral part, of what we mean by civilisation and, if democracy goes, civilisation in the end goes with it. Admittedly! We all of us, as I hinted at the beginning, know this, and most of us would echo, although we could not hope to emulate, the terms of Professor Burns's diagnosis. But how, then, save democracy? Apparently by appealing over the heads of leaders to "common folk." Common folk have never been so well educated or so well nourished. They have never lived for so long, enjoyed so much leisure, been imbued with so much energy. They form as a result a great reservoir of "unused ability." Can this ability not be utilised in the service of the State? Professor Burns is optimistic. He thinks that it can. But I cannot see that beyond pointing to the obvious growth of voluntary associations of common folk for public purposes, the W.E.A., the League of Nations Union, the Sunlight League, and so on, he gives any sufficient ground for his optimism. Admittedly all these things are good, and to the good. But if these are all, are they really enough? C. E. M. JOAD

CALIBAN SHRIEKS

Caliban Shrieks. By JACK HILTON. *Cobden-Sanderson.* 6s.

The title of this book suggests that a celebrated purveyor of jazz has taken to remorse or revivalism; whereas, in fact, the author is quite another Jack Hilton, an unemployed Lancashire working-man who has taken to Shakespeare. The book is his autobiography from the very snowy day when he was born "most likely by chance," down to his thirty-fifth year. He became a cotton operative, the war broke in, he came back to the factories and fell foul of foremen. Coming to the same conclusions as the less lucky convict in René Clair's *A nous la liberté*, he decided that capitalism had gone work mad, and became a tramp. But sooner or later all except the inveterate tramps return to work, and Mr. Hilton got the "craze."

With it came consequent decay. "As some would say, 'It's an ignorant way of getting a living; the many think it to be divine.' Fridays: see the eagle excrete its golden eggs (wage envelope) and so you feel there is something in it after all; but when Monday comes 'I have my doubts.'" Marriage brought him round and unemployment in fits and starts nibbled at his earnings till it got him down altogether. There seems to have been a stretch of prison and I gather Mr. Hilton is in some way in labour politics now.

That is the story, a very common one; but it is the story of a very uncommon man. His view of the English language may not be Fowler's, but he has a crude, vital, jubilant quality learned from the rough stuff of Shakespeare and has affinities with the bubbling tongue wagging of Joyce. After an education consisting of 1st: "Heaps of God"; 2nd: "England first, the world nowhere," and one blue-eyed English boy worth "twenty infidel Japs (Ju Jitsu being barred, of course)"—after this, half-time work began:

> Six o'clock in the morning, dark and chilly, a bit of tommy in a red handkerchief and a breast of good intent. The myth of work being a recreation faded the next morning and the grit of a super-English brand was solar-plexused within a week. Talk about Indian summer being a beautiful vision, it was a blasted reality in a cotton mill. Four walls, caged captivity, hellish noise, wheels going round, motion, speed, punches up the posterior to acclimatise you (golly, Mr. Millowner's daughter, marry me quick before I lose heart!)

The thimble-riggers behind the lines in France spoke his tongue:

> I'm Billy Fairplay, all the way from Holloway, never been known to run away. The sky's the limit, put down your dollops of dung and I'll pay you out in buckets of dysentery. You come here in rags and go away in motor cars. Shove it down thick and heavy. All paid. All played and away we go again—up she comes with the best of luck—there's two jolly mud hooks and a good old Kimberley.

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The result is that one is interested not in a case but in a man of flesh, blood and humour, who has sized up the world in his own way. The habit of pitying the unemployed is a too convenient one, for it tacitly assumes that a man out of work loses his individuality and ceases to be an active factor. He is a man for whom something must be done, a passive, non-seeing, non-judging creature hypnotised into a life of dead waiting. Mr. Hilton's book shows the fallacy of such a view. Hunger intensifies observation and simplifies judgment. With the craving for mere work there grows up in those who have been emancipated as well as paid off by the factories and the State, an idea that it is useless going back on the old terms and conditions. Even enforced and hungry leisure makes philosophers. Mr. Hilton can thump his tub and does so, but his sense of injustice has not destroyed his excellent gift of detachment. The chapter describing being in prison on remand is a good, dry piece of observation both of himself and conditions, and there is no self-pity in it. This is a fine, vigorous and sardonic book, not only a stab to the conscience but a thump in the ribs with it. V. S. PRITCHETT

NEW NOVELS

Our Young Barbarians. By BARBARA SILVER. *Macmillan.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

Spies in Ambush. By JOHN H. VAHEY. *Eyre and Spottiswoode.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

Contraband Cruises. By WILL ALLEN. *Heritage.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

The Bazalgettes. ANONYMOUS. *Hamish Hamilton.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

The Skirts of Time. By WINIFRED PECK. *Faber.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

The Little Wife. By WILLIAM MARCH. *Rich and Cowan.* 7*s.* 6*d*

Ripeness is All. By ERIC LINKLATER. *Cape.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

Miss Silver has taken a gruesome subject for her first novel. I can recommend it to those who can face life in the half-cooked. It is a study of conditions at a woman's college in Oxford. There have been others; one thinks immediately of *Dusty Answer*, that appalling and remarkable book which runs through the whole soda-fountain of adolescence. But *Dusty Answer*, besides being about Cambridge, was written ten years ago. It belongs to the heyday of futility, to the times when young people were violent, gloomy, and sophisticated, and usually rather well off. I remember the Oxford of the period as a place of crime, of scholarship and wild extravagance; nobody bothered about politics or appointment boards; outside life hurried by; within the frowning walls of the medina all was intrigue and languor.

Certainly no woman undergraduates could have climbed in, nor did they have much to enjoy, according to that sly and brilliant authority, *Making Conversation*, in their own fastnesses. But in the ten years that follow they have got going. Bedales has cast a longer shadow over the universities, and though infinitely removed from the amazonian freedom of American colleges, existence in Somerville or Lady Margaret Hall is no longer self-conscious and thin. *Our Young Barbarians* is written in the form of letters from Philippa to her friend Stella, from her first term to her last. We get a picture of a serious, sensible, hardworking young girl with a sense of humour and a love of literature. She dislikes Eliot and modern poetry, considers girls who use make-up "fluffy," coffee-parties "riotous," makes no intimate friends except for a terrible young man at New College, and is obviously a thorough prude. Her next great friend is a highbrow—but he reveals himself as a monster, a maniac:

> Then he asked me to live with him. For a fortnight, next vac, on his yacht, where we'd be quite undisturbed. It doesn't sound credible, but he said it just like that, sitting on the arm of my chair, with his arm on my shoulder. I thought at first it was some kind of joke, but he soon showed that he was perfectly serious. "For a fortnight at first: I don't want to wreck myself, but I must know the practice, as well as the theory of sex. Good for you too, Philippa."
>
> For some frightful moments I thought I should be sick. . . . I made for the door, and got out somehow, and walked and walked and walked. . . .

Finally she discovers a master prig, and falls in love with him. The letters have genuine form, one feels the author growing up continuously. She is careful not to reveal what degree she gets, and there are other evidences of selection. I prefer *Dusty Answer*, because I prefer brilliance and rhetoric to a careful sobriety, but Miss Silver is certainly a writer and has given us a graphic picture of her earnest and provincial generation.

Spies in Ambush is a thriller. The author is clearly worried by the improbability of thrillers (as opposed to scientific detective stories) and anxious to write one in which the events are plausible and the characters not melodramatic. He has succeeded, but the naturalness of everybody detracts from the excitement. A thriller must be exciting, it is essential that the pace be as fast as possible, as in the *Thirty Nine Steps*, Plausibility, probability, dignity, if they interfere, must all go overboard.

Contraband Cruises is another thriller. We must all occasionally experience that day-dream in which we live on a yacht; the summer in English estuaries, the winter in Mediterranean harbours, the equinoxes on the Bay of Biscay or the French canals. And smuggling brandy gives this dream an additional fillip. The author of *Contraband Cruises* is a sailor and clearly does live on a yacht. His smuggling sounds magnificently authentic. He makes one realise what hard work yachting is, how different the dream is from the reality, and his dialogue brings out to perfection the strange mixture, in naval people, of romance and banality, seediness and innocence. How typical that the hero, after receiving six hundred pounds for smuggling alcohol, should ruthlessly betray his employer when he is asked to smuggle cocaine. A gentleman does one, but not the other, and that's how empires are made. The accuracy and dramatic power of the author are remarkable, his plot is a little thin; he should study that masterpiece of modern smuggling, Crofts' *Pit Prop Syndicate*.

The Bazalegettes is a pastiche, an attempt to write a Victorian novel, complete with happy ending, diffuseness, good humour, understatement, and disingenuous purity. As the ladies' school of Victorian novelists are themselves only Jane Austen without the astringency, I can recognise a perverted pleasure in writing like them, but I don't see why anyone need be expected to read the result. All parodies should be short, a parody of slow motion very short indeed.

The Skirts of Time also deals largely with the Victorian period. It is a study of the struggle for woman's suffrage. As a general rule, one should mistrust the novel with a cause. Too often the characters are simply a row of clothes pegs; arguments and opinions dominate everything else. The four sisters here represent four points of view. That of the willing helper who is gobbled up by marriage, the intelligent fighter for the cause, the advocate of sexual freedom, and the seeker after moral beauty, who becomes a nun. All are united by a hatred of men, and all convincing. It is a much livelier and more readable novel than its historical and political nature would lead one to expect. I have a weakness for *The Bazalgettes* though I couldn't finish it. *The Skirts of Time* overcame a prejudice and carried me to the end.

The Little Wife is a book of American short stories. They are of the type of William Faulkner's and of the defiantly analphabetic author of *The Daring Young Man*. They are competent and graphic descriptions of the extremes of human pettiness, unhappiness and degradation. In short, very respectable examples of the slump technique. When a method begins to be widely imitated there is a reasonable probability that the tide will turn. The janitor perhaps will cease to be the central character in the American novel. There may be a recrudescence of earlier values in fiction. Misery is not enough.

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"Mackenzie!"

"Full-throated laughter, sir, a rousing bumper."

"And you, Priestley?"

"Zest and gusto, sir, the high spirits of a clever man."

"Very good, all of you, you avoided the trap. And you are quite right—for if you put irony, indignation, feeling—in short, wit—into this sort of thing you overdo it, like Swift, or merely irritate the public, like Joyce and Lawrence. You must be careful not to offend anybody. How are you going to manage? First: don't let your characters come to life—they must be types, you can abuse them freely. How do you create a type? You take a character and say he is a bridge bore or a golf bore or a poet or a colonel—and then whenever he appears he talks about bridge or golf or poetry or the army. Then you create a comic situation. You shut the poet and the colonel up in a stuck lift, you put the

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bridge bore on the golf links, or you let loose a pig at the vicarage garden party, like Linklater here. And then you put in the satire."

"How do you do that, sir?"

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Bugler Bliss's tongue was imperfectly taught, and that poignant call, that may summon the heart to a loneliness like the outer stars, brayed with his breath like a tinker's moke.

Major Gander's life had not been happy, and the ceremonies attendant on his death were correspondingly mismanaged.

"Got the knack? If the major's life had been happier would the bugler have known the Last Post? No—but don't you smell the eighteenth century? Now once more, please, here's the chalk—and put some poetry into it."

But the Silver Trumpets sang:

Blow, northern wind,
Send thou me my sweeting.

and a pizzicato, like the pin-prick pattern of April rain, softened all hearts and all desired that Daisy and Katherine and Bolivia should have twenty pink bottomed babies a-piece, a festoon of them, wreaths of them, troops of them, with no thought of prizes but simply to match May and fulfil the turning of the year. The triumph of all who'd begotten, and the travail of all who'd borne, were as warp and weft in their lot, and flute and fiddle, brass and drum, would join in a great cry, "Ripeness is All."

"Thank you very much. Time's up. Good night, boys. Happy Pens!"

"Yes, sir. Thank you, sir. Happy Pen, sir!"

CYRIL CONNOLLY

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SHORTER NOTICES

Women of Wales. By L. TWISTON DAVIES, F.S.A., and AVERYL EDWARDS. *Scholastic Press.* 8s. 6d.

The authors of this series of biographical sketches take a liberal view of their subject. Of the ladies, famous or little known, with whom they deal, many were Welsh only by marriage or residence or title, or, as in the case of Mrs. Siddons, the accident of birth in Wales. They open with Queen Katherine, widow of Henry V and wife of Owen Tudor, and include in their list Mary Sidney Countess of Pembroke, Lucy Walter, the mistress of Charles II and mother of Monmouth, the famous ladies of Llangollen, Lady Beaconsfield, and Mrs. Gladstone. But, for all the fame of these ladies, the best biography in the book is that of Blanche Parry, the nurse of Queen Elizabeth, and later an important personage in her household.

I'd Live It Again. By LIEUTENANT-COLONEL E. J. O'MEARA. *Cape.* 12s. 6d.

In this story of his life from his student days at Guy's, through his years in the Indian Medical Service, Col. O'Meara more than justifies the title he has chosen for the book. He has worked with zest and played with gusto, and his enjoyment of living he shares with his readers. His descriptions of the working people of the Borough and of the people of India ring true; and he is at his best when he is telling us of his work as a surgeon-physician. His account of the double poisoning case in which he was called as an expert witness is a novel in brief; and his descriptions generally, whether of big-game hunting, or of such hackneyed scenes as the Taj Mahal, are always fresh and vivid.

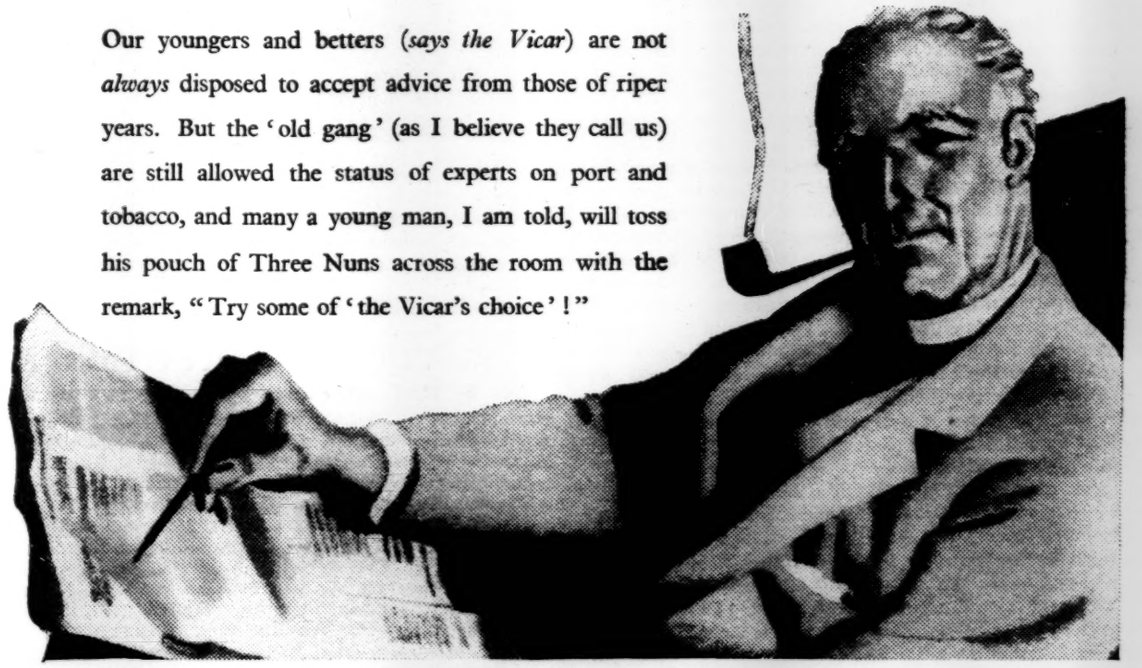
About Motoring

CYCLISTS IN ARMS

MANY motorists are intensely puzzled by the fierce opposition which so many cyclists offer to various current proposals planned to enhance safety on the roads. Memories of their own struggles with unreliable oil tail lamps help to explain the cyclist's reluctance to substitute a red lamp for a ruby mirror; nor is it difficult to understand that cyclists resent any innovation which encourages motorists to drive faster than ever. But motorists are frankly puzzled by the fury aroused in cycling circles by Mr. Hore-Belisha's interest in special cycling tracks along the edges of new arterial roads. The trouble is, of course, fundamentally psychological. Light has no fellowship with darkness, and there is no real affinity between cyclists and motorists. Their recruits are mainly drawn from different social and financial strata in the community. The motorist has benefited cyclists by paying for the magnificently surfaced roads of the present era, but this small benefit is pardonably forgotten when we realise how the motorist has all but ruined cycling as a pleasurable method of travel. The cycle received the chilliest imaginable welcome when it first appeared on our roads. Its rider was stigmatised as a "cad on castors," and he was harried by the police for scorching. He fought his battle manfully, and was eventually accepted by the community as possessing equal rights with the horse and the pedestrian. After figuring as the hero of a brief society craze, he sank at last to his true level, ranking as a harmless and usually impecunious traveller. Anon the motor car arrived, and robbed him of his pleasaunces. True, the motor car furnished him with smooth, non-skid roads, over which he could pedal with vastly reduced effort. But the reek of burnt hydrocarbons replaced the scent of hay and meadowsweet in his nostrils. No longer could he gaily wobble along the highway three abreast, revelling in the landscape. By day he must hug the hedge, and shudder as the wind of some leviathan projectile fanned his hair and threatened to graze his shoulder. By night he became so dazzled that vision degenerated into intermittent opalescences of pink and gold, amidst which he suffered a torturing uncertainty whether his small, tender person was even visible to the occupants of the speeding cars. Day by day these fast cars took an increasing toll of his fraternity, dispatching many of them to the hospital and even to the cemetery. Admitting that many cyclists are unskilled and unimaginative riders, they share their blunders and their crimes with a percentage of motorists; and at any rate their misdeeds are decidedly the less dangerous. If some cyclists are reckless, so are many motorists; and the reckless motorist may wind up his career by killing somebody, whereas the reckless cyclist seldom harms anybody but himself. So the present road crisis finds the cyclist suffering from a violent but perfectly comprehensible inferiority complex. He further labours under grievances which are both genuine and profound. He is very

WISE IN THEIR GENERATION

Our youngers and betters (*says the Vicar*) are not *always* disposed to accept advice from those of riper years. But the 'old gang' (as I believe they call us) are still allowed the status of experts on port and tobacco, and many a young man, I am told, will toss his pouch of Three Nuns across the room with the remark, "Try some of 'the Vicar's choice'!"



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thoroughly organised in his own defence—as well organised as, let us say, the licensed victuallers. His organisations are soaked in the resentful traditions which originated in the early days of cycling when cyclists were the pariahs of the roads, and this resentfulness is enhanced by the more modern tribulations of the fraternity, and by a very definite class consciousness, since the daily cyclist is almost always a poor man and the daily motorist is necessarily a man of some means. These cycling organisations are often guided in their policy by elderly men, bred in the antagonisms of the past, and fiercely opposed to any concessions. Their slogan is that the price of liberty is eternal vigilance. In such an atmosphere of hate, resentment, and suspicion it is not possible for Mr. Hore-Belisha's scheme for separate cycle tracks on great roads to receive a dispassionate examination.

This scheme can be approached from two very different angles; and individual verdicts upon it pivot entirely on the angle of approach. The cyclist, as a dauntless Briton, accustomed to fight for his personal liberties against a bureaucracy, eyes it sourly as just one more attack on his rights. He has won the freedom of the carriageway for his wheels after a long struggle, and it is once more threatened. So he confronts these cycle tracks emotionally. They are the thin end of the wedge in his eyes, and very possibly in fact as well as in fancy. If he accepts them, before long he will be barred from cycling on many main carriageways, on which he rode freely before motor cars became practical. Perish the thought! Our liberties are assailed! To arms, citizens! (Or at least, to ink!) This is all very human, natural, and comprehensible. But the people who press these cycle tracks upon us are actuated by logic, rather than by emotion; in so far as they are the creatures of emotion, it is compassion which animates them, rather than spite or hatred. They are confronted by an alarming death roll, which they seek to reduce. The modern road at the moment carries a weird and incompatible assortment of users—the cyclist, the sedater types of pedestrian, the hurrying scholar of tender age, the sports car, the six-wheeled lorry, the double-decker motor bus, the farm wagon, the perambulator, and many others. Shall they who govern adopt the kind of policy crystallised at country fairs by those small cages labelled "Happy Family," in which a fox, a hen, a rabbit, a rat, and other normally irreconcilable creatures are miraculously induced to repose side by side in apparent comradeship? Or shall they smash tradition, revise laws, and endeavour to segregate the various types of traffic on separate tracks? In this gallery the cyclist and the pedestrian are obviously cast to play the parts of the hen and the rabbit, whilst the so-to-speak ferocious and carnivorous motor vehicle represents the fox. One would imagine that the rabbit would prick his ears with joy at the prospect of being removed from uncomfortable proximity with the odorous and bloodthirsty fox. But our rabbit reacts very differently; and our showman, to wit, our Minister of Transport, betrays a naive and unsophisticated bewilderment at the rabbit's surprising passion to continue to dwell cheek by jowl with the fox.

In this difficulty, the wisest counsel is probably to play for time. Passions are hot at the moment. The cyclist is obviously terrified lest in company with the pedestrian he shall presently find himself debarred altogether from the use of certain roads, along the edges of which it is not possible to construct special tracks for him. On the other hand, it is not possible to suppose that any sane cyclist really desires to be fanned and grazed and dazzled by fast motor traffic, scorching along within inches of his elbow. It is to be hoped that the Minister of Transport will construct his special cycling tracks, as opportunity arises. In time an increasing number of cyclists will unquestionably learn to appreciate this safety provision, with its genuine comfort. In time logic may win yet another triumph over emotion.

R. E. DAVIDSON

Week-end Competitions

No. 263

Set by Martin Armstrong

Owing, no doubt, to the machinations of Teetotallers and Puritans, wine is often referred to as alcohol, but tea is never called theine, caffeine, or tannin. If you accuse a man of alcoholism he will probably knock you down: if you accuse him of theism ("a morbid state resulting from too much tea-drinking") he will probably not know what you mean.

We offer a First Prize of Two Guineas and a Second Prize of Half a Guinea for a diatribe (not exceeding 200 words) by The Reverend Doctor Folliott (in Peacock's *Crotchet Castle*) on this unwarrantable state of things.

RULES—

1. Envelopes should be marked with the number of the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and should be addressed to COMPETITIONS, 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1. Solutions must reach the Editor by first post on Friday, April 5th.
2. Competitors may use a pseudonym. Typescript is not insisted on, but writing must be on one side of the paper only.
3. The Editor's decision is final. He reserves the right to print in part or as a whole any matter sent in, whether it be awarded a prize or not. MSS. cannot be returned. When no entries reach the required standard no prize will be awarded.
4. No competitor is eligible for more than one prize in any one week.

The result of last week's competition will be announced in our next issue.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 261

Set by H. L. Morrow

Daniel O'Connell, "The Liberator," devised an effective means of shoo-ing off hawkers and beggars who accosted him in the Dublin streets by turning round and addressing them as "You Quadratic Equation," "You Parallelepiped," "You Lowest Common Denominator," "You Greatest Common Multiple."

A prize is offered for modern equivalents to this type of abuse, sounding furiously, but signifying nothing, such as might be addressed by any four of the following, speaking in their own technology:

The Marchese Marconi, Einstein, Mr. J. M. Keynes, The Archbishop of London, Mrs. Amy Mollison, Mr. Julian Huxley, Sir Arthur Keith, the Poet Laureate, Lord Lonsdale, Lord Ashfield, Mr. Augustus John, Epstein, Sir Edwin Lutyens, Sir Thomas Beecham, and Mr. Walter Elliot.

Report by H. L. Morrow

That competitions should be set and not read may be a commonplace enough reflection among those who devise such tortures, but it can scarcely ever have been more pointed than in this competition in which all the technical dictionaries from Grove to Gray's *Anatomy* seem to have been brought down, ransacked or (in some instances) stabbed furiously with the pin that is usually reserved for the more sporting *sortes* and the trophies presented to the adjudicator much in the proud manner of the small boy who has learned how to spell "Latitudinarianism" but, like myself, is not quite sure what it means. There were, in other words, plenty of furious sounds that alas! signified something without being either fantastic or very funny. The snare into which many competitors fell heavily lay in their failure to notice that while Daniel O'Connell employed the abstruse he kept as close as he might to brevity of meaning (as opposed to brevity of expression) and the verge of common understanding. There was a vast amount of somewhat misplaced ingenuity, amusing enough at charades at novelists' and publishers' parties, but not quite amusing enough in the chill before-breakfast atmosphere in which most adjudicators are forced to adjudicate. There were, for instance, such gigantic conglomerations as "You peripteral octastyle Corinthian portico" stuffed by T. E. Casson into the unfortunate mouth of Sir Edwin Lutyens; "Vierergeschwindigkeit" attributed to Einstein by J. A. Lindon; "You Newtonian Gravitational Pull," another Einstein example by Howard Booth, and a monstrous attribution to Sir Arthur Keith by J. L. Bachhouse: "May your asymmetrical Sulcus Lunatus fossilise with Pithecanthropus Erectus."

On the other hand, there were such refreshing examples of nearer-simplicity as:

J. M. Keynes: "You surplus value" ("Buskin").
The Poet Laureate: "You False Quantity" (W. Leslie Nicholls).
The Bishop of London: "You pragmatic syllogism" (S. J. Woolven).
Sir Thomas Beecham: "You assonance" (Niall O'Leary-Curtis and several others).
Mr. Walter Elliot: "You Unsubsidised Herring" (D. M. Moore).
The Bishop of London: "You Nave" ("Sigma").
Lord Ashfield: "You Hore, Belisha" ("Rowley Mile").

and, perhaps neatest of all, "You Surd," attributed to Einstein by "Peeten"—all of them crying for a prize yet falling sadly below form in their accompanying entries. The first prize goes (largely because of the brilliant Amy Mollisonism) to H. D. Barnes, for the following:

Mrs. Amy Mollison: "You cam!"
Mr. Julian Huxley: "You great crested grebe!"
Sir Edwin Lutyens: "You stylobate!"
Sir Thomas Beecham: "You dotted crochet!"

And the second prize to Allan M. Laing, who must surely be growing tired of rising from his seat in the middle of the school hall and walking up to the green-baize table for yet another prize. Mr. Laing's list of invectives was as follows:

Marconi: "You oscillating Pentode!"
Huxley: "You katabolic blastoderm!"

London Amusements

MATINEES

All at 2.30 p.m. unless otherwise stated.

ALDWYCH.	**The Dominant Sex.**	Wed., S.
APOLLO.	**Hyde Park Corner.**	Wed. & Sat.
COLISEUM.	**Variety.**	Sat
COMEDY.	**"Delusion."**	Wed. & Sat
DUCHESS.	**Cornelius.**	Wed. & Sat
GLOBE.	**Youth at the Helm.**	Tues., Thur.
HIPPODROME.	**Yes, Madam?**	Th. & Sat.
PHOENIX.	**"Family Affairs."**	Thurs., Sat.
PICCADILLY.	**There Go All of Us.**	Th., S.
PRINCES.	**The Alchemist.**	Wed., Sat.
QUEEN'S.	**Wind & the Rain.**	Wed. & Sat.
ROYALTY.	**"Frolic Wind."**	Th., Sat.
ST. MARTIN'S.	**Man of Yesterday.**	Tu., Fri.
SAVOY.	**The Aunt of England.**	Th. & Sat.
WESTMINSTER.	**Chase the Ace.**	W. & S.
WHITEHALL.	**Viceroy Sarah.**	Tues. & Sat.

THEATRES

ALDWYCH. Tem. 6404.
Evgs., 8.30 sharp. Mats., Wed. & Sat., at 2.30.
THE DOMINANT SEX.
By Michael Egan.

APOLLO. (Ger. 2663). 8.30. Wed., Sat., 2.30.
HYDE PARK CORNER by Walter Hackett.
MARION LORNE. GODFREY TEARLE.
GORDON HARKER. J. H. ROBERTS.

COMEDY. Evgs., 8.30. Mats., Wed., Sat., 2.30.
ERNEST MILTON in
"DELUSION."

DUCHESS. Catherine St., W.C.2. Tem. 8243.
Evgs., 8.30. Mats., Wed. & Sat., 2.30. (Smoking).
RALPH RICHARDSON in
CORNELIUS, by J. B. PRIESTLEY.

GLOBE. Ger. 1592. Evenings, 8.30.
Mats., Tues. & Thurs., at 2.30.
OWEN NARES,
ADELE DIXON, KAY HAMMOND in
YOUTH AT THE HELM.

HIPPODROME. 8.15. Thur., Sat., 2.30. (Ger. 3272).
BOBBY HOWES & BINNIE HALE in
"YES, MADAM?"
Vera Pearce. Wylie Watson. Bertha Belmore.

PHOENIX. 8.30. Thurs., Sat., 2.30. Tem. 8611.
LILIAN BRAITHWAITE in
"FAMILY AFFAIRS."

PICCADILLY. Gerrard 4506.
EVGS., 8.30. MATS., THUR. & SAT., 2.30.
"THERE GO ALL OF US."
MATHESON LANG and BEATRIX THOMSON

PRINCES, Shaftesbury Ave. Tem. Bar 3633.
Mon. next (April 1st), & subs. 8.30. Wed. & Sat., 2.30.
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THE WIND AND THE RAIN.
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Evenings 8.30. Matinees, Thurs. & Sats., 2.30.
"FROLIC WIND," by RICHARD PRYCE.
Based on Novel by Richard Oke.

ST. JAMES'. Whi. 3903. 8.30. Wed., Thurs., 2.30.
GLADYS COOPER & RAYMOND MASSEY present
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YVONNE ARNAUD with FRANK LAWTON.

ST. MARTIN'S THEATRE. (Tem. 1443).
Evenings, 8.30. Matinees, Tues. & Fri., 2.30.
LESLIE BANKS in
MAN OF YESTERDAY.

SAVOY. Evgs., 8.30. Mats., Thurs., Sat., 2.30.
HAIDÉE WRIGHT in
"The AUNT OF ENGLAND."

WESTMINSTER, Palace St., S.W.1. (Vic. 0283).
Last Performance April 6th.
Evenings at 8.30. Matinees, Weds. and Sats., 2.30.
CHASE THE ACE.
A new Play by Anthony Kimmins.
EDWARD CHAPMAN, ERIC PORTMAN, BASIL RADFORD
7s. to 1s. 6d. incl., all bookable.

WHITEHALL. (Whi. 6692).
Evenings, 8.30. Matinees, Tues. and Sat. at 2.30.
IRENE VANBRUGH in
VICEROY SARAH.

WYNDHAM'S. Temple Bar 3028.
BOX OFFICE OPEN.
DIANA WYNYARD in
SWEET ALOES, by Jay Mallory.
Run suspended until Mon., April 29.

PICTURE THEATRES

ACADEMY CINEMA, Oxford St. Ger. 2981.
Last Week, **MASKERADE** (A),
with Paula Wessely, and *CHARLEMAGNE* (A).
April 4th, at 8.45 p.m., Charity Première "Lac Aux Dames" (A). Commc. Apr. 5th, Vicki Baum's *LAC AUX DAMES* (A).

EVERYMAN (Opposite Hampstead Tube Station).
MONDAY, APRIL 1st, for SEVEN DAYS,
ANNABELLA in **MARIE** (A),
THE RUGGED ISLAND (U),
The PIED PIPER (Silly Symphony), and NEWS.
Parking facilities. Seats bookable by 'phone, Ham 2285.

Hampstead Labour Party, 1 Willoughby Rd., N.W.3.
Sunday, March 31st, at 6.0 & 8.0 p.m.
EISENSTEIN'S GREAT FILM,
"POTEMKIN."
Prices of admission 9d. and 1s. 3d.

KINO presents the famous Soviet Film,
"MOTHER" (Pudovkin).
Based on Maxim Gorky's novel,
at DENISON HOUSE,
296 Vauxhall Bridge Rd. (1 min. Victoria Stn.).
FRIDAY and SATURDAY March 29th & 30th,
at 2.0, 4.15, 6.30 and 8.45 p.m. each day.
Tickets: 3s. 6d., 2s. 6d. (res'd); 1s. 6d and 1s. from KINO, 84 Gray's Inn Rd., W.C.1.
Next Thursday, Friday, Saturday (April 4th—6th),
"STORM OVER ASIA" (Pudovkin).

VARIETY ENTERTAINMENTS

COLISEUM, Charing Cross. Temple Bar 3161.
Evgs., 6.30 & 9. Mat. Sats., 2.30.
COLISEUM VAUDEVILLE. By ANTHONY NELLE.
Comic and Musical Spectacles with 97 Artistes, including Many Variety Stars. 1s. 3d. to 8s. 6d.

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The Classified Advertisements columns of THE NEW STATESMAN & NATION present to readers quite the cheapest method of announcing lectures and meetings, letting rooms and flats, attracting people to guest houses and holiday centres, selling anything for personal or home use and offering or obtaining services of all kinds.

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The Advertisement Manager,
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10 Great Turnstile, London, W.C.1

REPERTORY THEATRES

BIRMINGHAM **Repertory.**
Evenings 7.30. Mat., Thurs. 2.30.
Volpone. By Ben Jonson.

CROYDON **Repertory.**
Evenings 8. Sat., 5 & 8.15.
I'll Leave It to You. By Noel Coward.

HARROGATE **White Rose Players.**
Evenings 8.15. Sat., 6.35 & 9.
The Roundabout. By J. B. Priestley.

LIVERPOOL **Repertory.**
Evenings 7.45. Mat., Sat., 2.30.
The Flowers of the Forest.
By John Van Druten.

MANCHESTER **Repertory.**
Evenings 7.30.
The Painted Veil. By Somerset Maugham.

NORTHAMPTON **Repertory.**
Evenings 6.30 & 8.50.
The Sacred Flame. By Somerset Maugham.

PLYMOUTH **Repertory.**
Evenings 7.45. Fri., 8.15 Mats., Sat., 2.45.
Ambrose Applejohn's Adventure.
By Walter Hackett.

The Repertory Theatres whose announcements appear above are members of the Association of Repertory Theatres. *For information concerning Theatres belonging to this Association, or qualified to belong to it, apply to the Honorary Secretary, Bache Matthews, 7 Tavistock Place, London, W.C.1.*

MISCELLANEOUS

AU pair. Wanted one or two friends, left views, run comfortable, well-situated small electric-worked country house. Gardens, orchard, greenhouse, garage. GRENFELL, Wiveliscombe, Somerset.

MACKIE'S EDINBURGH SHORTBREAD is crisp, rich, enticing and very famous. We pack and post to any address. Per tin, by inland post, 2s. 10d., 5s. 1d., 7s. 3d., 9s. 3d. 11s. 6d. Foreign postages on request. J. W. MACKIE & SONS, LTD., 108 Princes Street, Edinburgh, 2.

JOHN PEEL TWEEDS—woven from pure Cumberland wool, warm and weather resisting. Full suit length 35s. 6d. or 10s. 6d. per yard, 56in. wide. Send for patterns. REDMAYNE & SONS, LTD., No. 10, Wigton, Cumberland.

WOOLLIES DIRECT FROM SHETLANDS.—Pullovers, Cardigans, all kinds of Woollies, hand-knitted for you by native knitters from lovely real Shetland wool. Nothing else so soft, light, comfy. All fashionable styles, plain, or in famous "Fair-Isle" patterns. Shetland Prices, far less than shop prices. Illustrated Booklet and Wool Colour Card Free.—WM. D. JOHNSON, Dept. S.T.182, Mid-Yell, Shetlands.

BOOKPLATES. Heraldic and Pictorial, designed from £2 2s. Particulars from OSBORNE. 27 Eastcastle St., London, W.1.

UNITARIAN Publications Free.—"A Common-sense view of the Bible." MISS BARMBY, Mount Pleasant, Sidmouth.

ARTIFICIAL SUN CENTRE. German lines, both sexes. Central, club-like. Halls for games and exercises. Ultra-violet insolation. A refuge from winter's cold and fog. Fifth season. Write Box 665, N.S. & N., 10 Gt. Turnstile, London, W.C.1.

THE CASANI SCHOOL OF BALLROOM DANCING. 90 Regent Street (Piccadilly Circus), Private Lessons daily, 10 a.m. to 10 p.m., in all the latest ballroom dances. Guaranteed to teach you steps of any dance in THREE PRIVATE LESSONS, £1 1s. Cd. Practice Classes every Tuesday, 8.30 to 10.30 p.m. 3s. 'PHONE REGENT 4438-9.

HAVE YOU COCKROACHES? Then buy "BLATTIS" UNION COCKROACH PASTE, universally and successfully used in all parts of the Globe, extermination guaranteed, from Chemists, Boots' Branches, Stores, or Sole Makers: Howarths, 473 Crookesmoor, Sheffield. Tins 1s. 6d., 2s. 6d., 4s. 6d., post free.

LITERARY

TO REVIEWERS AND OTHERS. Any quantity of books bought; mod. fiction, biography, criticism, political, educational. ANNEXE BOOKSHOP, 51 Essex Road, N.1. CLE 1807.

FREE BOOKS. Light up your mind. Save your own soul yourself. Hardcastle, Hurstpierpoint, Sussex.

NEARLY everyone can write well enough to get into print. The Premier School's Subject Chart (copyright) indicating hundreds of ideas, and giving many valuable hints, also Sample Lesson, Prospectus, and details of Postal Tuition in Article Writing, Story Writing, or Writing for Children, will be sent Free on application to PREMIER SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM, 23 Premier House, Brunswick Square, London, W.C.1.

WRITE FOR PROFIT. Send for free booklet. REGENT INSTITUTE (1912) Palace Gate, W.8.

Poet Laureate : " You anapaestic assonance ! "
Beecham : " You augmented diatonic interval ! "

The four competitors who drew attention to the " howler " in which a typist (on her own unrepentant confession) created an Archbishopric of London—the others were, perhaps, the more skilled diplomats by their silence—did so as tactfully as they dared, most tactful of all " Rowley Mile," who wrote :

If this imaginary prelate is Roman : " You Vulgate ! "
If Anglican : " You Nave of St. Paul's ! "

CALIBAN'S PROBLEM CONTEST

PROBLEM 118.—BY THEIR FRUITS YE SHALL KNOW THEM

" Extraordinary village this is," I said, in the cheerful tap-room at Much Succulence.

" Isn't it ? " said my wife. " Everyone seems to be something to do with fruit. There's a Mr. Currant at the Smithy ; a Mr. Raspberry at the Post Office ; our landlord here is named Pear—— "

At this point the landlord himself broke in.

" It's much stranger than that, Missis," he said. " There's seven of us here that are keen on growing fruit, and each one of us specialises on a fruit that is the namesake of one of the others ! "

My wife laughed. " Sounds rather like a puzzle."

" It is a puzzle," said Mr. Pear. " See if you can work it out. For instance, there's three of us grows fruits as is much smaller than our own vegetable namesakes."

Another voice came from the settle. " And there's only two of us as isn't married. That's Pear here and Apple, the policeman."

" That's right," said Pear. " The human namesake of the fruit Mr. Currant grows got married only last week."

" The chap who grows raspberries," put in the voice from the settle, " he married Monica May, and her sister Clementine is Mr. Peach's wife."

" Are the ladies keen on fruit, too ? " asked my wife.

" Not all of 'em," chuckled the voice from the settle. " There's a certain young lady "—he winked at the landlord—" as is engaged to the currant-fancier. And currants is a fruit she can't abide."

Mr. Pear laughed. " Worked it all out yet ? " he asked. " If not, here's another fact for you. The human namesake of the fruit Mr. Raspberry grows is the chap that himself grows pears."

" And here's another," said his friend from the settle. He handed me a scrap of paper : " The fruit which is the namesake of the chap that grows apricots is grown by the human namesake of the fruit Joe Currant grows."

Who grows gooseberries ?

PROBLEM 116.—THE BEAGLES BEAT THE MASTIFFS 2—0

The " league table " is fairly easily arrived at by a combination of trial and inference :

	T.	P.	Be.	Bu.	M.	W.	D.	L.	Goals. F.	Goals. A.	Pts.
Terriers ..	—	1	1	3	1	4	—	—	6	2	8
Pointers ..	0	—	0	0	2	1	2	1	2	2	4
Beagles ..	0	0	—	1	2	1	1	2	3	3	3
Bulldogs ..	2	0	2	—	0	1	1	2	4	6	3
Mastiffs ..	0	1	0	2	—	1	—	3	3	5	2

PROBLEM 115.—CHUMP'S WIFE WAS SUCH A NUISANCE

A set of Low's cartoons goes to C. J. Robertson, 9 Weymouth St., W.1. *Three* points are awarded.

PRIZES FOR PROBLEM SOLVERS

A set of Low's cartoons is awarded to the sender of a correct solution selected at random.

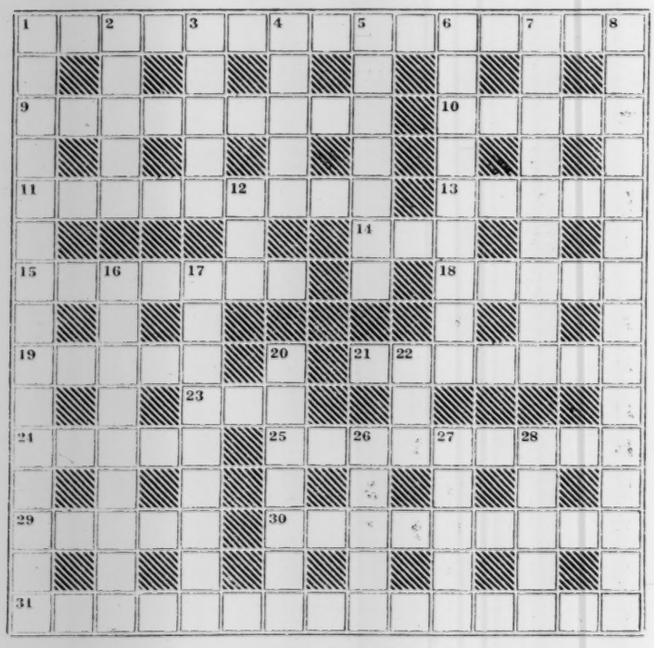
In addition, a record is kept of correct solutions sent, and of the points scored weekly by solvers. On attaining 100 points a solver is entitled to a prize consisting of any book (or books) reviewed or advertised in these columns, of a value not greater than 10*s*. Solvers who have won a prize on this basis are eligible for a second prize on attaining a further 120 points, and for a third prize on attaining a further 150. Solutions must be addressed to CALIBAN, c/o the Editor, and must reach this office not later than Tuesday week following publication of the problem. Solutions to two problems may be sent in one envelope ; but on separate sheets of paper.

Some indication should be given of the method of solution.

CALIBAN

WEEK-END CROSSWORD 264

The sender of the first correct solution to be opened may choose as prize a copy of either *This England* or *The Playtime Omnibus*. Envelopes should be addressed to " CROSSWORDS," 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1, and must arrive not later than first post next Wednesday.



Set by L.-S.

The last week's winner is
J. A. Gill, 410 Perry Road, Nottingham

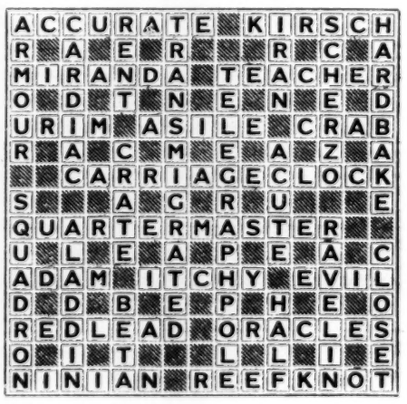
ACROSS

1. Fast going to the dogs.
9. One of these sounds one fewer than a flying 14.
10. A chest of tea for a certain class of people.
11. Not a loud enough shout contractually.
13. I held this place in ruins.
14. How one concludes 15.
15. Farthest removed from a couple of sixes.
18. Birthplace.
19. His translation is one of the earliest on record.
21. A row frequently knitted in pairs.
23. He comes back in silence.
24. Material for a lady's ball.
25. He gives a timely lead on Sundays, journalistically speaking.
29. Where the glorious paths lead.
30. The Egyptian dromedary's star part.
31. It should of course be officered by Houyhnhnms.

DOWN

1. Sweetness ingrained as it were.
2. How wandering knights went wrong?
3. London oak.
4. Palatial pendant.
5. Miss Vernon's recreation.
6. An elementary case book.
7. Its utility is the result of its bad conduct.
8. How the great apes fight by the sound of it.
12. 300 to a university college.
16. Weapon for a return shot.
17. Will you and Anthea meet me at the club ?
20. Benedick called his lady this.
22. Turn round the buoy with the top missing.
26. Paradoxically went mounted on nothing.
27. A warm hearted old god.
28. The heir he's missing.

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD



THE charge for classified advertisements is One Shilling and Sixpence per line per insertion (a line averages seven words). One line should be added for Box Number. Substantial reduction for a series of insertions. Copy first post Wednesday. The Advt. Manager, N.S. & N., 10 Great Turnstile, London, W.C.1. (Hol. 3216.)

OBITUARY

MAJOR T. JEFFERSON-FAULDER passed away on March 20th, 1935, after a short illness; aged 63, Senior Surgeon of the Golden Square Nose, Throat and Ear Hospital for 27 years. Sadly missed. His sorrowing wife Dorothy. R.I.P.

LECTURES AND MEETINGS

CONWAY HALL, Red Lion Square, W.C.1.—Sunday, March 31st, at 11 a.m.: JOHN A. HOBSON, M.A.: "THE SENSE OF FAIR PLAY." 6.30 p.m., Concert of Chamber Music. Admission Free. Visitors welcome.

THE GUILDHOUSE, ECCLESTON SQUARE, S.W.1.
"THE INTERDEPENDENT WORLD."
"RELIGION."
SUNDAY, March 31st, at 3.30 p.m., HAROLD MOODY, M.D.: "NEGRO PEOPLES."
At 6.30., DR. A. MAUDE ROYDEN: "THE PRAYER OF PETITION."
No Tickets are required, but a Collection will be taken.

THE ETHICAL CHURCH, Queen's Road, Bayswater, Sunday, Mar. 31 at 11. MR. H. J. BLACKHAM: A PHILOSOPHY OF ENGLISH NATIONAL LIFE. 6.30. RABBI MATTUCK: THE POSITION OF THE JEWS IN THE MODERN WORLD.

AT 7 St. Martin's Place, Trafalgar Square, W.C.2. Sunday, March 31st, 8 p.m., MR. A. KERRIDGE, "RUSSIAN MUSIC BEFORE AND AFTER THE REVOLUTION," with illustrations. Tuesday, April 2nd, 8 p.m., MR. ANDREW MACLAREN, "MARXIAN ECONOMICS" (II). Free. Discussion.

SCHOOLS AND EDUCATIONAL

FOREIGN LANGUAGES AND INTELLECTUAL STANDARDS. Univ. Woman (Somerville, Eng. Lit.), supported by French and German graduates, will receive pupils unable, owing to increasing difficulties of exchange, to go abroad. Liberal education, good library, good food. Opening May 15th. Box 709, N.S. & N., 10 Gt. Turnstile, London, W.C.1.

THE Headmistress of a large first-class Boarding School trains two girls over 17 as School Matrons, arranging two or three terms in Domestic Science House, one or two terms in the School Sanatorium, and one year in Senior or Junior House under experienced matrons. Unusual opening for well-educated girls. Premium required during first year. For full particulars write to S.M., c/o PATON, 143 Cannon Street, E.C.4.

THE GARDEN SCHOOL, WYCOMBE COURT, LANE END, BUCKS. Boarding School for Girls (ages 4-18) in lovely part of Chiltern Hills. 61 acres. 550ft. above sea-level. Sound education on free individual lines, with scope for initiative and creative self-expression in all subjects, including arts, crafts, music dancing, eurhythmics. Aims: at developing harmonised cultured personalities with a wide outlook on life and a high ideal of social usefulness. Fees £105-165 per annum.

BEACON HILL SCHOOL, Boyle's Court, South Weald, Essex (nearest village, Great Warley) Co-educational, from two years. Applies modern knowledge in diet, psychology and teaching methods. Moderate fees, easily accessible, but in lovely country surroundings. Majority of trained staff with five years experience in the school itself. Inquiries to DORA RUSSELL, Principal.

KESWICK SCHOOL: ENGLISH LAKES. Co-educational. Ages 6–18. Fees £82 (or less).

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MALTMAN'S GREEN, GERRARD'S CROSS. *Head Mistress:* MISS CHAMBERS, Girton College, Cambridge late Head Mistress of the Huddersfield High School. The aim of this school is to develop the character, intellect, and healthy growth of the child for the good of the community, to encourage self-expression, to increase resource and initiative by practical work. The girls will be prepared for the Universities, the Medical Profession, and for advanced work in Music, or Art. Fees include Elocution, Dancing, Cookery. Gerrard's Cross is 300ft. above sea level and is on gravel soil. The house is delightfully situated in its own grounds of 15 acres.

MARLBOROUGH HOUSE, Reading. Preparatory School for boys, 6½–14. Good staff, grounds, workshops, swimming bath. Free family life. Headmaster, H. E. MAKINS, M.A. Oxon.

BADMINTON SCHOOL (Westbury-on-Trym, Bristol). A Public School for Girls (Founded 1858).
Visitor: The Right Hon. the Viscount Cecil of Chelwood, P.C., K.C., M.A., D.C.L., LL.D.
President of the Board of Governors: Gilbert Murray, Esq., LL.D., D.Litt., F.B.A. Regius Professor of Greek in the University of Oxford.
Head Mistress: Miss B. M. Baker, B.A.
Extra accommodation for both Senior and Junior Schools has been provided by the erection of new Junior School Buildings; entrance scholarships are awarded to the Senior School. Sound scholarship is combined with preparation for world citizenship.

ST. CHRISTOPHER SCHOOL, LETCHWORTH, (recognised by the Board of Education). A thorough education for boys and girl to 19 years, at moderate fees in an open-air atmosphere of ordered freedom and progress. Headmaster: H. LYN HARRIS, M.A., LL.B. (Camb.).

SCHOOLS—Continued

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Recognised by the Board of Education as an efficient Secondary School.
Provides a sound secondary school education for boys and girls from 9 to 18 years of age up to School Certificate and Higher School Certificate standards.
Special attention is given to the training of character and to the cultivation of a right sense of social and international justice.
Situated in its own estate of 350 acres, the School is completely equipped with Chemistry, Physics and Biology Laboratories, Gymnasium, Swimming Bath, Common Rooms, Library, Handicraft Workshops, Art School, spacious Playing Fields, Home Farm and Garden. For Prospectus and full particulars apply:
THE BURSAR, ACKWORTH SCHOOL, Nr. PONTEFRACT, YORKS.

BRECHIN PLACE SCHOOL for Girls and Boys.—Apply MRS. E. M. SPENCER, 11 Brechin Place, Gloucester Road, S.W.7.

BEDALES, Petersfield, Hants. The pioneer co-educational Public School (founded 1893). Separate Junior House. For particulars of Scholarships offered, apply to the Headmaster, J. H. BADLEY, M.A., Camb.

PINEWOOD, Crowborough. Sussex, 700 ft. a.s.l adjoining Ashdown Forest. Progressive Home school for boys and girls, 3-12 years. Individual education. Open air life. Entire charge taken. Apply Principals.

SCHOOLS FOR BOYS AND GIRLS TUTORS FOR ALL EXAMS.
Prospectuses and reliable information forwarded free of charge.
The age of the pupil, district preferred, and rough idea of fees should be given.
J. & J. PATON, Educational Agents, 143 Cannon Street, London, E.C.4. Tel.: Mansion House 5053.

LINGFIELD 45 for a thoroughly up-to-date Public School for Boys and Girls, 10–18. Individual attention; initiative encouraged. Greater Felcourt, East Grinstead, W.1. Sussex.

DR. WILLIAMS' SCHOOL, DOLGELLEY NORTH WALES.
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Headmistress:
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Junior Department, ages five to ten.

HAWNES SCHOOL, AMPTHILL. Public School on individual lines for girls from 10-19. Playing fields, park, woodland, 93 acres. Riding, Swimming. Girls are prepared for the usual examinations and for University entrance or may specialise in Languages. Art, Music, Domestic Science. Fees £120-£180 p.a.

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L'AVENIR, Villars sur Bex, Switzerland. International school for Boys and Girls (4-18) combining modern methods in education with the advantages of family life. Altitude, 4,100 feet.

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DAVIES'S, 5 & 7, Sussex Place, W.2. Padd. 3215/6.
I.C.S., Taxes, Home Civil, Consular, F.O.
VACATION COURSE in the Compulsory Subjects
April 8th—17th inclusive.

THE BEDFORD TRAINING COLLEGE FOR TEACHERS, 14 The Crescent, Bedford. Recognised by the Board of Education. Principal: MISS MARGARET SPENCE. Students are prepared for the examination of the National Froebel Union. The course of training is for 3 years. Fees with residence £94 10s. to £100 16s. Fees without residence £31 10s.—For particulars apply SECRETARY.

THE SCHOOL, DARTINGTON HALL, TOTNES, SOUTH DEVON. A department for the training of teachers in Nursery School, Kindergarten and Junior School Methods. Instruction is offered in the theory and practice of progressive education. Special attention is paid to the contributions of the new schools of psychology and to the utilisation for education of rural life and industries. Preparation for Higher Certificate National Froebel Union. Further particulars on application.

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APPOINTMENTS VACANT & WANTED

APPLICATIONS are invited for an Assistant-in-Charge (male) of the Morecambe Branch of the Lancashire County Library. The salary will be £200, rising by £10 a year to £250. Candidates must possess the Diploma of the School of Librarianship or of the Library Association, and must have had experience in a county or municipal library. Applications, accompanied by not more than three testimonials, must reach the Director of Education, County Offices, Preston, by the first post on Saturday, 13th April.

FULHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL.
PUBLIC LIBRARIES DEPARTMENT.
Applications are invited for the undermentioned appointments in the Public Libraries Department, viz.:
(1) Librarian-in-Charge, Central Lending Department —Grade B (£225–£15–£390). Commencing salary in accordance with qualifications and experience.
(2) Children's Librarian—Grade B (as above). Commencing salary £225.
(3) Senior Assistant—Grade B (as above). Commencing salary £225.
(4) Assistant (16 to 18 years of age)—Grade A. (£75–£15–£300). Commencing salary according to age.
Applicants must, in the first three cases, be either Fellows or Associates of the Library Association, and, in the other case, hold the matriculation or an equivalent certificate.
Further particulars of each appointment, with application form, may be obtained from the undersigned on sending a stamped, addressed foolscap envelope. The latest date for applications is 13th April. Canvassing is very strictly prohibited.
Town Hall, Fulham, S.W.6. WILFRED TOWNEND,
March, 1935. Town Clerk.

THE VICTORIA UNIVERSITY OF MANCHESTER.
Applications are invited for the post of Lecturer in Music. The Lecturer appointed will be in charge of the Department. Duties to commence September 29th, 1935. Stipend £400 per annum. Applications should be sent not later than April 26th to the REGISTRAR, from whom further particulars may be obtained.

WANTED.—Fully trained Occupational Therapy Aide for general hospital. Applications with particulars of diploma, experience and salary expected, to MESSRS. SCOTT AND GLOVER, W.S., 1 Hill Street, Edinburgh.

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YOUNG WOMAN of twenty-five, graduate Hons. Eng. (London), four years good experience, keenly interested in politics and social service, seeks employment in September: preferably in progressive Co-educational School. First-class dramatic work and games; adequate shorthand and typing. Box 702, N.S. & N., 10 Gt. Turnstile, London, W.C.1.

YOUNG WOMAN, 27, personality, progressive, keenly interested political and social service or any cultural activity. Knowledge of child psychology. Seeks any part-time work. Salary of secondary importance. Box 719, N.S. & N., 10 Gt. Turnstile, London, W.C.1.

SOLICITOR, 27, requires spare-time post, yielding some remuneration. Political, literary or secretarial. Box 718, N.S. & N., 10 Gt. Turnstile, London, W.C.1.

WOMAN TEACHER, 25, M.A. History (London), seeks post Sept. Good French; exper. Progress. School; indiv. work methods; specially interested teaching Current Topics. Box 720, N.S. & N., 10 Gt. Turnstile, London, W.C.1.

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THE WEEK IN THE CITY

By TOREADOR

THE JUBILEE AND TWO BRITISH INDUSTRIALS—FLORIN SHARES—IMPERIAL CHEMICAL—BUILDING SOCIETIES AND THE HALIFAX

THE Stock Exchange has a wonderful way of getting prices higher, when it has the mood, without the slightest increase in public business. That happened on Tuesday. The professional selling had been over-done and the "bears" decided to close lest the Anglo-German conversations should end in something more than hot-air. But I can see no prospect of public activity broadening until the coming orgy of sporting festivals and Jubilee celebrations is past. The Jubilee may help the hotels and the railways, but as far as Stock Exchange business is concerned it must be written off as the combination of one long Jewish fast and Derby Day. This is no reason for selling securities—only for forgetting them. Some British industrial shares on the scare about the belga have already fallen to prices which should normally attract buyers. For example:

	High, 1935.	Present Price.	% Fall from Highest Price.	Earned. %	Paid. %	Yield % on Earnings.	Yield % on Dividends.
London Brick Co. and Forders ...	88/3	77/6	12.2	24.7	22.5	£6 7 6	£5 16 3
United Steel Companies	29/6	25/7½	13.4	9.7	5.5	7 11 6	5 17 0*

* On basis of 7½% annual dividend, interim of 2½% having been paid.

I referred last week to the vulnerable position of the British export trade in steel if the gold bloc devalued, but two subsequent events have lessened the danger. The tariff on imports of elementary iron and steel products has been raised from an average of 33⅓ per cent. to about 50 per cent. and the British Iron and Steel Federation has expressed its willingness to enter the Continental Steel Cartel. Whatever happens, the increase in imports of foreign iron and steel will now be limited. As for the brick trade, the annual output of London Brick is 1,500 million bricks and imports (mainly from Belgium) amounted to 236 millions in 1933 and 338 millions in 1934. The tariff of 10% may now be increased. There is no reason why holders of London Brick shares should worry before 1936. The *Economist* index of building activity, based upon the value of building plans passed, corrected for seasonal variations and rise or fall in building costs, indicates that building activity this year will be at a record level.

Economist INDEX OF BUILDING ACTIVITY.
Monthly Average of 1924 = 100.

1934—January ..	203	1934—August	219
February ..	193	September ..	180
March	193	October ..	206
April	192	November ..	223
May	191	December ..	166
June	226	1935—January ..	245
July	197	February ..	222

If the Government's new Housing Bill is to be taken seriously, and cheap money is to be maintained, a further improvement in the building trade this year is inevitable.

* * *

How would devaluation in the gold bloc affect the Continental industrial shares quoted on the London Stock Exchange? A reader has asked me to deal with Royal Dutch, Unilever N.V. and Philips Glow Lamps.

	Present Price.	Dividend %.	Yield %, (1) allowing for Premium on Florin.	Yield % (2) if no Premium on Florin.	Price to Yield (1) with no Premium on Florin.
Unilever N.V. 7% pref. Fl. 12 ...	31/4½	7	£6 18 0*	£4 0 9	20 11
Unilever N.V. Fl. 12	28/10½	4	4 13 9*	2 15 0	16 10½
Royal Dutch Fl. 100	19½	6	4 6 3*	2 10 6	11½†
Philips Lamps Fl.7.50	45/7½	11	5 2 0*	3 0 0	26 8

* Present florin rate is 7.08½ to the £.
† Or 12½ if the shares fell to give the same yield as Shell Transport gives to-day.

The present sterling prices of these shares are, of course, affected by the fact that the sterling value of dividends paid is increased by the premium on the florin. If the florin were depreciated to the sterling level, the sterling prices of the shares could [logically] fall to give a dividend yield (with no premium on the florin) equivalent to the present dividend yield (with premium on the florin). Perhaps this is a contingency we need not consider. No doubt, the Amsterdam Stock Exchange would take a more cheerful view of business prospects if the florin were devalued. It would depend on circumstances. If there were chances of an international conference to stabilise currencies and reduce tariffs the shares might rise sharply on the Amsterdam Stock Exchange. If there were no chances of such a conference, that is, if there were only the gloomy prospect of increased tariffs, quotas and exchange chaos, the Amsterdam Stock Exchange might take a bearish view of the future. In the cases of these particular companies the trade prospects are variously affected. The only certain fact seems to be that the Amsterdam prices of these shares could not be expected to rise immediately to compensate for the fall in the sterling quotations on devaluation.

* * *

A surprisingly modest increase in profits is disclosed by Imperial Chemical Industries, Ltd. No doubt the wealthy surtax payer who holds Imperial Chemical deferred shares as a "lock-up" for capital appreciation will be enraged at the proposal to amalgamate the ordinary and deferred shares on the basis of four deferred of 10s. for one ordinary of £1. The deferred shares are entitled to one-third of the surplus profits after the ordinary shares have received 7 per cent. and the capitalisation is £43,756,659 in ordinary shares of £1 and £10,868,281 in deferred shares of 10s. The £1 ordinary shares are now receiving a dividend of 8 per cent., the 10s. deferred shares one of 2 per cent. The exchange of shares would therefore double the immediate income of the deferred shareholders, but eventually halve it if the present surplus profits were doubled. It should be remembered that the proposed exchange would have the effect of extinguishing £10,868,280 deferred share capital and increasing the ordinary share capital by £5,434,140. Thus, the Company would be able to apply £5,434,140 to general reserve. The balance-sheet, as every one knows, has hitherto been the weakest feature of the Imperial Chemical position and to strengthen it enhances the dividend prospects of the ordinary shares.

* * *

The natural instinct of private investors to-day is to "cash in" their profits on British and Colonial Government stocks and to place their money safely on deposit with a building society until the next war starts. The natural instinct of the building society to-day is to refuse the money which is offered. Too large a volume of deposits would merely force the building society into making mortgage loans on inferior security or over-investing in gilt-edged securities—either of which would create a vulnerable position. Indeed, some of the smaller societies under pressure of competition may have already accepted mortgages on jerry-built houses whose repair bills in the years to come will exceed the capacity-to-pay of the owners. I do not suggest that the position of building societies as a whole is to-day unsound, but it is one which will require careful management and I think it would be wise for investors who have no specialised knowledge to confine their attention to the larger societies. For example, consider the colossus known as the Halifax Building Society, whose annual general meeting is reported on another page. Its outstanding mortgages, which are spread over the greater part of Great Britain, amount to £78 millions (an increase in 1934 of £8½ millions) and 78 per cent. of them represent debts not exceeding £500 (the average being £392). The Halifax has strengthened its financial position by keeping a substantial part of its assets in the form of advances to local authorities. The proportion of outstanding mortgages to total assets is only 76 per cent. as against 95 per cent. in the cases of the Westbourne Park and Temperance societies. A comparison between the Halifax figures and those of the London colossus—Abbey Road—is made in the next table:

	1933.	1934.
ABBEY ROAD		
Total share and loan capital, end year	£39,925,041	£42,875,204
Outstanding mortgages, end year ..	£33,948,849	£37,858,316
Proportion outstanding mortgages to total assets	81.0	84.1
HALIFAX		
Total share and loan capital, end year	£89,139,126	£98,794,103
Outstanding mortgages, end year ..	£69,607,530	£78,099,086
Proportion outstanding mortgages to total assets	75.1	76.0

A linking up of the money resources of the building societies with the increasing money demand of the local authorities arising out of the new Housing Bill seems to be a matter of urgent national importance. If offers of money are being hurled at the building societies it is an insult to the unemployed not to use them.

Company Meeting

HALIFAX BUILDING SOCIETY

SIR ENOCH HILL'S ADDRESS

THE eighty-second Annual General Meeting of the Society was held at Halifax on Monday. Sir Enoch Hill, J.P., F.C.I.S., President, said (in part): During the last seven years the number of investors has been increased by 293,099; the invested funds have increased to £98,794,103; the total assets to £102,797,613 and the total reserve funds to £3,853,509; and the increase in the total assets in the past year alone is £10,154,922.

The total reserve funds after providing for all expenses and interest stand at £3,853,509, being an increase of £499,945. Of these total reserve funds £491,854 has been specially set aside to meet any loss which may occur in the future in the realisation of properties mortgaged to the Society, this the Directors regard as more than ample provision.

The mortgage business during the year has surpassed all previous records, the new loans advanced amounting to £21,694,200, or £3,146,107 more than any previous year's total. The number of new borrowers was 37,516, being 4,576 more than in the preceding year. The total amount owing upon mortgage is £78,099,086, being an increase of £8,491,555, and the total number of borrowers is 198,922, an increase of 19,320. The properties mortgaged are spread over the greater part of the United Kingdom and the average amount owing on all the Society's mortgages is only £392 each. The mortgage accounts are in a very satisfactory condition.

Of the total assets £23,898,257 is represented by cash in Banks and in hand, or loans to Local Authorities not susceptible to any depreciation in value. The proportion of the assets represented by liquid funds is equal to 23.2 per cent. of the whole.

The Share and Deposit funds amount to £98,794,103, an increase of £9,654,977, and it is strong evidence of the confidence of the investing public enjoyed by the Society that a severe check has been necessary to prevent an increase in these funds.

The net profit for the year after providing for all expenses and charges amounts to £495,641. The Directors recommend: the distribution, in addition to interest, of a bonus of 10*s.* per cent. to Paid-up Shareholders Class I (making £4 per cent. per annum); £1 per cent. to Monthly Subscription Investing Shareholders (making £4 10*s.* per cent. per annum) both interest and bonus being free of Income Tax; £30,000 be granted to the Staff Superannuation Fund; and £50,000 be written off Office Properties Account.

The management expenses are slightly lower than ever, being only 8*s.* 8*d.* per £100 of Assets.

The new accounts opened during the year number 110,907, and the total accounts now open number 622,323, being an increase of 54,180.

The public conscience has been greatly awakened to the necessity for improved housing conditions of the people, and it is a great testimony to the resourcefulness of so many hundreds of thousands of individuals that they have either acquired, or are acquiring, free from mortgage debt, their own homes without direct pecuniary assistance either from the taxpayer or the ratepayer. Great praise is due to His Majesty's Ministry of Health for the valuable service they are giving to improve the housing conditions of our people.

I regard it as a matter of very great national importance and value that the efforts of private individuals should be mobilised in the direction of securing home ownership which precedes an elevated citizenship and great success and comfort in individual life, which does not occur when houses are provided by national or municipal effort, on a tenancy basis, supported by a subsidy borne by the taxpayer and ratepayer.

Notwithstanding the many admirable provisions of the new Housing Bill now before Parliament, I regard with considerable concern the Provision that houses should be extensively provided by Local Authorities on the basis of community homes, which will constitute the dead end of social life, so far as home ownership is concerned. A nation of home owners, which has been rapidly approaching by the operation of Building Societies, is, I think, infinitely more beneficial than to create a sentiment of indifference or apathy on the part of the individual citizen to lead him to be content as a tenant of a community home.

The Chairman then dealt with the question of Local Authorities making loans under the Small Dwellings Acquisitions Acts, saying that a number have found providing finance for the purchase of homes much more expensive than anticipated. The Society has taken a transfer of a number of mortgage loans made by Local Authorities who desired to escape the responsibilities they had entered into. Continuing he said:—Providing financial assistance has been well proved in the case of Building Societies and I think it is in the highest interests of the nation that private enterprise should be encouraged to carry out work of which it is proved to be capable. Building Societies, as incorporated by law for over 50 years, have been conducted on the highest level of mutual benefit both to investor and borrower without proprietary capital to take toll either from one or the other. This is an ideal method of finance, which has proved a success. The report was approved.

Company Meeting

PROVINCIAL CINEMATOGRAPH THEATRES LTD.

THE Twenty-fifth Annual Ordinary General Meeting was held in London on Wednesday last.

Mr. Mark Ostrer, Chairman, presiding, first dealt with the various items of the Balance Sheet and continuing said (in part): The net profit for the year amounted to £482,509, an increase of £23,019 compared with the previous year, which with the balance brought forward from last year of £121,280 gives a total available of £603,789. Your Directors recommend the payment of a dividend on the Ordinary shares at the usual rate of £15 per cent., being the eighth consecutive year this dividend has been maintained. This dividend will require £75,000, leaving £122,834 to be carried forward.

The Gaumont Palace, Derby, was opened in September, 1934; the Gaumont Palace, Chelsea, and the Gaumont Palace, Yeovil, in December. I am pleased to be able to report that these theatres are all doing well.

I regret that we have not yet been granted any reduction in the Entertainments Tax, but the Chancellor of the Exchequer in his last Budget Speech stated that our industry was "at the top of the queue" and we are looking forward with some confidence to a reduction of this tax in respect of the cheaper seats at least.

Owing to our close association with The Gaumont-British Picture Corporation, Ltd., we are able to book their films on advantageous terms. These pictures enjoy continued popularity throughout the country, and it is my considered opinion that the prestige of British Pictures is increasing not only in this country, but in all parts of the world where the English language is understood.

Regarding the question of over building. I regret that the hope I expressed last year of the formation of a Joint Committee of the Cinematograph Exhibitors' Association and the Kinematograph Renters' Society to deal with this matter did not materialise.

Your Company were the pioneers in the erection of high-class picture theatres in this country, and we also are celebrating our Silver Jubilee this year. The increase in the profits is a satisfactory indication that we have maintained our position and that we are justified in looking back over our career of twenty-five years with pride and to the future with every confidence that we shall continue to prosper and pay substantial dividends. I am pleased to be able to report that the profits during the present financial year to date have been more than maintained.

The Report and Accounts were unanimously adopted.

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